

Saturday 26 September 2015

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### Setting up for success

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**APOY 2015** We reveal the top 30 **street photography** images from **Round 6**



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Recently I watched a YouTube video about how to make better video blogs. Although the young lad didn't know any of the technical terms, everything he said was correct. 'Sit away from the window early in the morning, when the light is a little more orange,' he explained. 'And make sure it isn't coming straight through the window. This will create nice soft light that looks great for blog videos'. He then talked about the f/2.8 setting on his compact camera. 'I just leave it on

that as it makes the background look a bit blurry and professional,' he added.

Many young people learn the basics of photography on their smartphones. Most will then progress to another camera. These days that may not be a DSLR or even a CSC. It could be a camera like the DxO One (see pages 44-49), which connects to an iPhone. However, for the more conservative among us, on pages 11-17 you can learn how to set up a DSLR or CSC just like the professionals.

**Richard Sibley, deputy editor**

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## ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK



IMAGES MAY BE USED FOR PROMOTION PURPOSES ONLINE AND ON SOCIAL MEDIA

© DAVID BALL

## Metamorphosis by David Ball

Canon EOS 6D, 17-40mm,  
20secs at f/11, ISO 100,  
Lee Little Stopper

'While on holiday in St Just, north Cornwall, I headed to a beach in Porth Nanven,' says David. 'This area was number one on my list of places to visit and go shooting. I had seen so many pictures of this stunning cove, which is famous for its sunsets and rocks that look like dinosaur eggs.'

'However, I still didn't quite know what to expect. I already had a rough idea of a composition in my head and after a bit of searching I came across this stunning piece of rock with great texture and detail. On top of that it also had some great leading lines that headed towards the sea. I started shooting and the rest is history, but I did come away very happy. This shot is, in my opinion, unique.'

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## Send us your pictures

If you'd like to see your work published in *Amateur Photographer*, here's how to send us your images:

**Email** Email a selection of low-res images (up to 5MB of attachments in total) to [appicturedesk@timeinc.com](mailto:appicturedesk@timeinc.com).

**CD/DVD** Send us a disc of high-resolution JPEG, TIFF or PSD images (at least 2480 pixels along its longest length), with a contact sheet, to the address on page 20.

**Via our online communities** Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.

**Transparencies/prints** Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 20.



## NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Chris Cheesman

### Lens-lock glitch

Olympus still plans to ship the OM-D E-M10 Mark II to Europe this month, despite suspending sales in Japan due to a lens-lock error.

Olympus said the lens-lock pin on a 'small number' of cameras doesn't function correctly, causing certain lenses with plastic mounts 'not to lock properly'. Olympus confirmed that a 'few' cameras already sold in Europe 'may also be susceptible to this mechanical issue' and has offered a free inspection. Visit [www.olympus-europa.com](http://www.olympus-europa.com) (go to cameras>customer support>repair service and service announcements).



### TPOTY deadline

The 1 October deadline for Travel Photographer of the Year 2015 is fast approaching. Open to amateurs and professionals, the overall winner will receive £2,500. Entry fees start at £7.50, while entry to Young Travel Photographer of the Year is free. Visit [www.tpoty.com](http://www.tpoty.com).



© JASON EDWARDS

### iPhone 6s revealed

The latest version of the Apple iPhone 6, the iPhone 6s, features a 12MP imaging sensor on its main camera, plus a 5MP front-facing camera. The iPhone 6s, and larger iPhone 6s Plus, also shoot 4K video, which should allow users to extract an 8MP still image. The 12MP resolution of the main camera has been increased from 8MP. The front-facing camera, which lends itself to selfies, now carries a 5MP sensor compared to 1.2MP on the previous model. Visit [www.apple.com/uk/iphone](http://www.apple.com/uk/iphone).



### Kodak 360° camera

Kodak has unveiled a new action camera, the PixPro SP360 4K, designed to capture 360° video through its dome-shaped lens. The 12-million-pixel, palm-sized SP360 also shoots stills and is Wi-Fi and NFC enabled. It is due out in October at a price yet to be announced.



### Zeiss launches new Milvus line of lenses

Zeiss has revealed a new range of manual-focus lenses for Canon and Nikon DSLRs and video cameras. The 'high-performance' Milvus lenses are: a 50mm f/1.4, 50mm f/2, 85mm f/1.4, 21mm f/2.8, 35mm f/2 and 100mm f/2. Due on sale in October, they are also compatible with Sony mirrorless cameras, via an adapter. For a first look, see next week's AP (on sale Tuesday 29 September).



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## WEEKEND PROJECT

### Shoot your own 'In the bag'

While the final image is the most important part of photography, for a lot of us the kit we use and shoot with is just as enticing. Photographers are also incredibly nosey when it comes to gear, and an open camera bag is like a light to a moth as we can't help peering over to see what others are shooting with.

Our regular *In the Bag* feature is a showcase for photographers to reveal what's in their camera bag, allowing us to have a guilt-free poke around the kit they use. But instead of looking at others, why not have a go at doing your own? If you're happy with the result, send it to us at [appicturedesk@timeinc.com](mailto:appicturedesk@timeinc.com) to show off your gear to everyone else.

**1** For the most pleasing results and to satisfy the perfectionists among us, try to line everything up as neatly as possible when arranging your kit. You'll be amazed what a difference it can make.

**2** Think about the surface you lay your gear on – the lounge carpet won't really cut it. Instead, look for a background that perhaps hints at the subject you shoot the most or a surface with a pleasing texture.



# BIG picture

A 1966 image of East End gangsters Reggie and Ronnie Kray

◀ Two legendary British figures are about to re-enter the public eye with the release of Brian Helgeland's film *Legend*, in which Tom Hardy plays the dual roles of Reggie and Ronnie Kray.

Here we see the brothers – two gangsters who were the foremost figures of London's organised crime scene in the 1950s and '60s – having a cup of tea after 36 hours of police questioning about the murder of George Cornell.

This image was shot by William Lovelace, a photographer for the *Daily Express*. Lovelace, who died in 2003, was a multiple award winner and made a name for himself by capturing images of war, celebrities and reportage. He was also among the reporters who travelled to Brazil to track down Ronnie Biggs, one of the criminals responsible for the Great Train Robbery of 1963.

## Words & numbers

*One should really use the camera as though tomorrow you'd be stricken blind*

Dorothea Lange  
American documentary photographer  
1895-1965

44%

of people in the UK have lost photos because of a broken or corrupt device

SOURCE: KODAK ALARIS



**3** With all your gear laid out neatly on the floor, you're probably going to have to reach for your smartphone to capture the shot. However, if that's not up to scratch, think about borrowing a friend's camera.

**4** While your cameras and lenses will draw the eye in, the accessories or other little pieces that you find invaluable can be just as interesting. Don't forget to include them in the photograph!

© PHIL HALL





# Sony Alpha 7S II

**Richard Sibley** looks at the key new features of the **Sony Alpha 7S II**, and gives his first impressions of the new 12.2-million-pixel camera with an incredible maximum sensitivity of ISO 409,600

## At a glance

- 12.2-million-pixel, full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 50-409,600 (expanded)
- Internal 4K video capture
- Up to 120fps 1080p video
- Magnesium-alloy build
- 2.35-million-dot EVF
- 5-axis image stabilisation
- 1.23-million-dot tilting LCD screen
- Price approximately £2,500

## Wi-Fi and NFC

The Sony Alpha 7S II has built-in Wi-Fi and NFC, allowing connection to smartphones and tablets via the Sony PlayMemories Mobile app.

## New shutter

The new shutter is 50% quieter than the one on original Alpha 7S, and is tested to 500,000 actuations.

## Lens mount and body

The body of the Alpha 7S II is made from magnesium alloy, while the lens mount has been strengthened to cope with larger lenses.

## Rear screen

Like the other Alpha 7 cameras, the rear screen of the Alpha 7S II is a 3in, 1.23-million-dot articulated unit.



## The Sony Alpha 7S II's improved video capabilities

WITH its large sensor, high sensitivity and low noise, the Sony Alpha 7S is hugely popular with videographers. There is one slight issue, and that's the fact that although the Alpha 7S can output 4K video footage to an external recorder, it can't save this footage internally. We've recently seen the Sony Alpha 7R II record 4K footage internally, so it was expected that the Alpha 7S II would also have this facility – and it doesn't disappoint.

As well as being able to shoot at 1080p, the


Alpha 7S II can now save 3,840x2,160 4K footage at either 24/25/30fps. The footage is recorded in an XAVC S format, with an MP4 wrapper and 4:2:0 colour sampling with the option of either 100Mbps or 60Mbps bit rates.

There are also a couple of new picture-profile gamma settings in the form of S-Gamut3.Cine/S-Log3 and S-Gamut3/S-Log3 contrast curves. These are in addition to the S-Log2 setting that has previously been available. The new

settings offer a wide colour gamut and maximise the dynamic range for video use, offering better tonal reproduction in the shadow and 18% midtone areas. This should enable videographers to get the flattest possible video footage for post-production editing.

Full HD video has also been improved, with the Alpha 7S II now having the ability to shoot at up to 120fps. This allows for internal slow-motion recording at up to 5x slower.



 WITH both the Sony Alpha 7 and Alpha 7R now being on their second generation, it was only a matter of time before the Alpha 7S went the same way. As such, the Alpha 7S II is a mixture of refinements to the original camera and updates that we have previously seen on the Alpha 7 II and Alpha 7R II.

Externally, there is very little to report. The body of the Alpha 7S II matches that of the other second-generation cameras.

One of the areas that has been updated is the viewfinder. The Alpha 7S II now has the same EVF as that found on the Alpha 7R II, being an XGA OLED Tru-Finder with a resolution of 2.35 million dots.

### Image sensor

For those who aren't familiar with original Alpha 7S, the sensor in this, and in the A7S II, is a full-frame 12.2-million-pixel CMOS unit. The Alpha 7S has a sensitivity range of ISO 100-102,400, which can be expanded to an impressive ISO 50-409,600. With the same sensor, the Alpha 7S II has the same sensitivity range, but improvements to the image-processing algorithm mean that the noise-to-signal ratio has been improved slightly, resulting in lower noise. However, I don't know how much better the image quality is as I wasn't allowed to save any images with the pre-production camera.

### Autofocus

With the Alpha 7S II using the same image sensor as its predecessor, it doesn't employ the on-sensor phase detection that is found in the Alpha 7 II and Alpha 7R II. Instead, contrast-detection AF is used, but this has also been improved from the original camera. The camera has 169 AF points, which go almost from edge to edge, but with a higher concentration



in the centre of the frame for more accuracy. With an f/2 lens attached, Sony claims that the Alpha 7S II can focus at -4EV, which is impressive and is just one of the reasons why those who shoot in low light will love the Alpha 7S II.

The focusing speed has also been improved, particularly in video where it is now quoted as being twice as fast.

### Stabilisation

Like the Alpha 7 II and Alpha 7R II, the Alpha 7S II has built-in 5-axis image stabilisation that allows photographers to shoot at around 4.5EV slower shutter speeds than usual.

### First impressions

Although the updates to the Sony Alpha 7S II are no surprise, there is still a lot to get excited about. The 5-axis image stabilisation, improved build and handling, internal 4K recording, slow-motion video and improved AF should all be the icing on the cake.

For videographers, there is certainly a reason to buy the new camera, while professional event photographers will surely make a beeline towards the Alpha 7S II.

The Sony Alpha 7S II will be available from the middle of November, priced around £2,500.



Pictured here with the Sony FE PZ 28-135mm f/4 G OSS lens, the Alpha 7S II should prove a hit with videographers

For the latest news visit [www.amateurphotographer.co.uk](http://www.amateurphotographer.co.uk)

## Get up & go

The most interesting things to see, to do and to shoot this week. By Jon Stapley

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### Dursley Walking Festival

Get your muddiest boots on and go on a romp around the Cotswolds with the Dursley Walking Festival. There are several walks available, so make sure you have a look and pick the one that looks the most picturesque.

1-4 October, [www.dursleywelcomeswalkers.org.uk](http://www.dursleywelcomeswalkers.org.uk)



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### LONDON

### Peripheral Visions

Moscow-based artist Olga Chernysheva has an exhibition at GRAD London, documenting the interactions of people and objects within the structures and spaces of contemporary Russia. These evocative scenes are powerful and unmissable.

2 October-21 November, [www.grad-london.com](http://www.grad-london.com)



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### HULL

### Photography Festival

There's a month of free exhibitions, workshops and more at the Hull International Photography Festival throughout October. Immerse yourself in the world of photography – amateurs and professionals are welcome.

2-30 October, [HIPphotoFest.com](http://HIPphotoFest.com)



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### LONDON

### Elizabeth Taylor: Grit and Glamour

This exhibition at London's Getty Images Gallery is in association with The Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation. It charts the star's life through never-before-seen images of her celebrity, success and activism.

From 9 October, [www.gettyimagesgallery.com](http://www.gettyimagesgallery.com)

### British Life Awards

This is your last chance to enter one of the ten categories in the British Life Photography Awards – the deadline closes this weekend! Can one of your images sum up something special about British life?

Until 26 September, [www.blpawards.org](http://www.blpawards.org)



© DAVID YEO

### EVERYWHERE





# Viewpoint Tony Kemplen

With its light-blue plastic body, the **Ikonette** from **Zeiss Ikon** stands out from the array of post-war models – just don't mention the light leaks

**T**he output of the Zeiss Ikon brand was prodigious. Over several decades, hundreds of different cameras were marketed. Often individual models would have a choice of lens, shutter and film-format combinations, so the number of permutations was vast. In one year alone, the Zeiss Ikon catalogue listed 104 different cameras and 936 variants.

Models of all shapes and sizes were made, many of them such as the Contax and Contarex achieving iconic status. Perhaps it's not surprising that there were occasional hiccups, though, one of which is this week's camera, the 1958 Ikonette.

With an unusual kidney-shaped profile, and extensive use of pale-grey and blue plastic, the Ikonette certainly stands out in the crowd of rather drab post-war models. It's said that Zeiss Ikon aimed the product at 'lady photographers', marketing it as much for its potential to be a fashion accessory as for its photographic capabilities. Maybe the designers took their eyes off the ball in the latter respect, as it became clear that the pale plastic camera body was not always up to the job of keeping stray light out.

The example I used belongs to my dad who, as well as being a keen camera collector, is also a very hands-on repairman when it comes to old cameras. He'd read about the potential for light leaks, and rather than take any chances, he carefully painted the inside of the camera with matt-black paint, before stubbornly



This image of post-industrial Sheffield was taken with the Ikonette in weak winter light

leaving it on a sunny window sill for several days part-way through shooting a roll of film. I can't speak for the rest of them, but this one is certainly light tight!

With a 45mm f/3.5 Novar lens and a four-speed shutter, the Ikonette can handle a range of shooting conditions. Focusing is by scale, and the aperture and shutter speeds are both set using fairly chunky rings around the lens barrel. A noticeable feature is the large single lever on the front that both winds on the film and acts as shutter release. It's a clear descendent from the earlier pre-war Tenax I and its post-war poor relation, the East German Taxona. Zeiss managed to get something right with its Ikonette, though: in the one I used, this lever works smoothly, while both my Tenax I and Taxona are stiff and awkward.

I chose a week in February to try out the Ikonette, and while the weak winter light might have been a problem I had no issues. There's a cable-release socket, a tripod thread and a 'B' setting, so taking photos in low light is an option.

While many cameras have similar specifications, and it's technically unremarkable, the Ikonette does look good in the display case.

Tony Kemplen's love of photography began as a teenager and ever since he has been collecting cameras with a view to testing as many as he can.

You can follow his progress on his 52 Cameras blog at [52cameras.blogspot.co.uk](http://52cameras.blogspot.co.uk). You can also see more photos from the Ikonette at [www.flickr.com/tony\\_kemplen/sets/72157640934671775](http://www.flickr.com/tony_kemplen/sets/72157640934671775)



**Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest?** Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 20 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

## New Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography. By Oliver Atwell



### Art & Makeup

by Lan Nguyen-Grealis, Laurence King, £28, hardback, 208 pages, ISBN 978-1-78067-485-8



WHEN we think of fashion photography, our attention is perhaps restricted to three individuals: the photographer, the fashion designer and the model. However, there's a another figure in the equation, who acts as the glue between them all:

the make-up artist. Lan Nguyen-Grealis is an award-winning make-up artist who takes her inspiration from paintings, sculptures, cinema and performance art. Her references include Picasso, Warhol, Marie Antoinette, Cleopatra, *Mad Men* and *The Great Gatsby*. In this beautiful volume we see her work captured by a range of photographers, most notable among them, Rankin. Many of the images are captivating and the creations mind-blowing. *Art & Makeup* is a great example of how collaborative the act of photography can be. ★★★★★

### Londoners: Street Scenes of the Capital 1960-1989

by Robert Hallmann, Amberley Publishing, £15.99, paperback, 160 pages, ISBN 978-1-44564-562-9



THE VIEW of an outsider is perhaps more interesting than that of a long-term resident of a location. When you have distance you're able to observe and record

without expectation. This is exactly what we find in this small book from photographer Robert Hallmann, who grew up in Westphalia, Germany. Robert travelled to London speaking only a few words of English and began documenting the city in order to gain a greater understanding of his new environment. This persisted for years and we're left with an intriguing document of a city undergoing radical change over three decades. While not all the images are necessarily revelatory, there are still plenty of gems that make this a worthy purchase for anyone interested in the capital's history. ★★★★★



'JETTY'



Jetty was photographed by Mark Bauer using the Lee Filter's Little Stopper and 0.6 ND Hard Grad filter.

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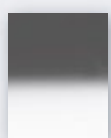
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# It's all in **the set-up**

Six professionals  
reveal the secrets  
to their success



## **Jeremy Walker**

Landscape professional Jeremy Walker explores ways to get the best image quality from his Nikon D810



## **Matt Hart**

Expert-in-the-field Matt Hart takes us through how he calibrates his Fujifilm X-T1 to perfection



## **Steve Gosling**

Olympus's Live Bulb function helps take the guesswork out of long exposures. Steve Gosling shows you how



## **Paul Goldstein**

When shooting wildlife, Paul Goldstein reckons you should be able to alter key settings simply by touch



## **Michael Wayne Plant**

Street and portrait specialist Michael Wayne Plant shows how he sets up his Sony Alpha 7II



## **Andy Hooper**

Professional sports photographer Andy Hooper walks us through his AF fine-tuning to capture the action







© JEREMY WALKER

release, an exposure is started electronically and finishes when the second curtain closes. It is this opening of the mechanical shutter before an exposure actually starts that significantly reduces both vibration and blur.

After the first press of the shutter release, and having raised the mirror up, wait a few seconds before exposing the image as this will help reduce any loss in image quality.

## Mirror-up

The electronic front-curtain shutter has to be used with the mirror-up function. I use the mirror lock-up all the time as it helps to reduce blur and vibration caused by the mirror 'slapping' up – especially at slower shutter speeds or with long lenses.

The mirror-up function is easily set without going into a menu as it sits on the camera's top-plate on a rotating wheel, marked as Mup.

There is no point whatsoever in using the electronic front-curtain shutter or mirror-up function if you are not using an electronic cable release or remote control. Any touching of the camera will potentially lead to vibration, blur or camera shake. Firing the shutter release with your finger should really be avoided.

The Nikon D810 is an incredible camera that offers the potential for super-sharp images that are rich in detail. However, you should treat the camera with the respect it deserves if you want to achieve the ultimate rewards. This is a precision tool and should be used as such.

Take time to set the camera up and learn how to make the most of its exceptional capabilities and you will not be disappointed.



Jeremy Walker is an award-winning professional photographer who is a specialist when it comes to producing high-quality landscape and location photography for advertising, design and corporate clients. A meticulous approach serves him well.  
[jeremywalker.co.uk](http://jeremywalker.co.uk)

# Landscape

**Jeremy Walker** reveals how to get good vibrations from his **Nikon D810** using the electronic front-curtain shutter mechanism

THE NIKON D810 has a much quieter shutter than the D800/800E anyway, but the electronic front-curtain shutter significantly reduces vibration caused by the opening and firing of the shutter mechanism.

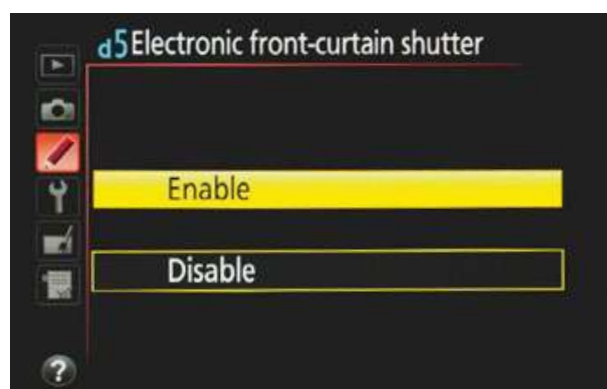
Typically, the vibration caused by the mirror going up and the shutter opening will have an adverse effect on image quality – especially when working at slower shutter speeds, macro work or with long telephoto

lenses. But what exactly is the electronic front-curtain shutter?

A standard focal-plane shutter has two curtains: one that opens and exposes the chip, and a second one that follows it and closes to end the exposure. The electronic front-curtain shutter, on the other hand, means you fire the camera and the first curtain opens as normal, but no exposure is made although the chip is uncovered.

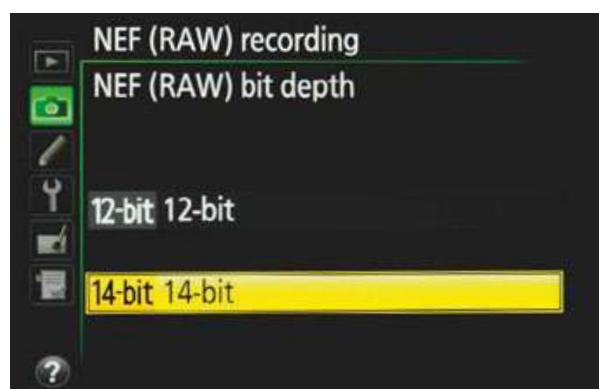
At the second press of the shutter

## JEREMY'S SET-UP ON THE NIKON D810



### 1 Electronic shutter

Hit the menu button and select the Custom Setting Menu and then under Shooting/display, select option d5. Toggle right and then up and highlight Enable, and press the OK button. The electronic front-curtain shutter is now set until you choose to disable it in the menu.



### 2 Raw settings

In the shooting menu, highlight NEF (raw) recording and highlight NEF (raw) bit depth and scroll right. The menu will give you a choice of 12-bit depth or 14-bit depth options. Highlight 14-bit depth for the highest quality and to ensure you get the best files possible.



### 3 Mirror-up

In conjunction with the electronic front-curtain shutter you must use the mirror-up lock. This is located on the top left of the camera on a rotating wheel. Depress the small button at the front of the wheel and rotate the wheel until the Mup symbol is in line with the white mark.





© MATT HART

# Street

**Matt Hart** explains how he calibrates his **Fujifilm X-T1**, with a tried-and-tested method that has its roots in film

THE FUJIFILM X-T1 is perfect for my street photography because of three key factors: the tilting screen, its speedy shooting and its small size. People don't recognise the X-T1 as a professional-looking camera, which makes it perfect for the kind of photography I like to do.

I set white balance to auto in Menu 2, and I let my camera control the ISO settings in Auto ISO mode, which I set in Menu 1. I don't give it completely free rein, though, as I set

the default sensitivity to 200 and the maximum to 6,400, so my pictures won't be too noisy.

In Menu 1, I set the camera to take Fine JPEG+raw, and set the Dynamic Range to 100%. If I want to use the film simulation modes for JPEGs, I'll go with Monochrome Plus Red Filter for black & white, and Fujifilm's PRO Neg for colour.

The final bits of fine-tuning are setting the Sharpness to +1 and Noise Reduction to -1.



Matt Hart is based in Liverpool and is passionate about street photography, having developed the skill to observe and be virtually invisible. This lets the world carry on around him without affecting the scene he's shooting. Keeping things simple is his style.  
**matthewhartphotography.com**

## Back-button focusing

In Menu 4, set AE/AF-Lock Mode to Switch, and the AE/AF lock button to both AE and AF. With this configuration I can use the AL and AF buttons to back-button focus, which means getting your camera to lock focus when you press one of these back buttons in manual mode.

This means that your shutter release is for shooting rather than focusing, therefore allowing you to expose an image much more quickly. You can then keep taking shots over and over again without worrying about the AF kicking in.

Locking focus in this way does require some practice and preparation. I use single-shot mode most of the time – I very rarely use continuous focusing on the street. I generally pick a point 2ft [60cm] away from me where there's an object or landmark – a litter bin is a good example. I then pre-focus the camera on the bin using back-button focus (pressing the AF Lock button) and lock it in.

This means that no matter how many times I hit the shutter, the focus won't change. I can then walk down the street, and every time someone walks a couple of feet in front of me they'll be in focus.

To shoot someone from a little further away I simply have to re-lock focus at a distance of 3ft [1 metre] using another landmark, with the same rear-button method.

This system actually has its roots in film. I shoot with a film camera too, and when I'm using it I manually focus my lens to a certain point at f/8 or so and then wait for someone to walk into my zone of focus.



## MATT'S SET-UP ON THE FUJIFILM X-T1



### 1 Auto ISO

After setting the camera up to shoot both Fine JPEG+raw files (ensure you've got enough spare memory cards), I then look to set up the auto ISO. I select a default ISO of 200, as well as both upper and bottom limits for the range (ISO 200–6,400 is a good starting point).



### 2 Focusing

If shooting mono, you can't go wrong with the Monochrome + R film simulation preset. Then set up the back-button focusing, which can be found in the X-T1's fourth menu. Get this sorted and you'll be able to shoot quickly and efficiently.



### 3 Mechanical shutter

The X-T1 gives you the option to shoot with either the mechanical or electronic shutter. There's no doubt the electronic shutter is quieter to use (which is useful when you don't want to be noticed), although I prefer the mechanical one for its instant readout speed.





# Long exposures

The Live Bulb function on Olympus cameras helps take the guesswork out of long exposures, says **Steve Gosling**

LONG-EXPOSURE imagery has become very popular in recent years as it creates images that record a dimension of the world we can't see with the naked eye. As such, these images are difficult to pre-visualise – it's hard to predict exactly what the camera can 'see'.

This can be one of the great attractions of long-exposure photography as it adds an element of luck or chance to the final image. However, it can also prove incredibly frustrating, particularly when it comes to exposure. Taking

a 4min exposure at dusk (when there's usually little chance to repeat the shot), only to discover that a 6min one was required can be exasperating to say the least.

Not any more, though, thanks to a unique feature introduced by Olympus to its OM-D range of cameras – Live Bulb and Live Time shooting modes.

## What is Live Bulb?

This feature gives a regular update on the exposure as it is progressing, while the shutter is open. So the

photographer is able to see the image 'develop' in-camera and stop the exposure once the shutter has been open for sufficient time to give a correctly exposed photograph.

The interval of the update can be set from 0.5sec to 60secs with the timing set by the photographer depending on the total length of exposure. So, for example, with an exposure of 8secs you might require an update every 2secs, whereas with an exposure of 2mins a 30sec update may be more appropriate.

In Live Bulb mode, the shutter remains open for as long as the shutter is depressed. In Live Time mode, the shutter release has to be pressed once to open the shutter and then pressed again to close it.



Steve Gosling specialises in creative landscape photos, with moody and atmospheric images being his signature style. Steve also runs workshops, to encourage and inspire all levels of photographers. His images have been published worldwide.  
**stevegusling  
photography.  
co.uk**

## Reading the histogram

To make the most of the Live Bulb feature, it's important to understand the histogram. As we know, the histogram shows the distribution of tones in an image from pure black (on the left-hand side of the display) through shades of grey to pure white (on the right-hand side of the display).

It's important to remember to 'expose to the right' – that is, to bias the exposure towards the highlight end of the display without losing detail in the highlights.

This will give the best-quality information to work with when processing the image. So in practice, when using the Live Bulb/Live Time features of Olympus cameras, keep the shutter open until the histogram display moves across to the right-hand side, and close the shutter just before highlight details are lost.

## STEVE'S SET-UP ON THE OLYMPUS OM-D RANGE



### 1 Set interval

Select the Live Bulb function in the menu (Menu>Custom Function E>Live Bulb). Then select the Live Bulb interval time required for the particular exposure you're shooting. In this example, the interval has been set to 8secs. Next, turn the Exposure Mode dial to Manual.



### 2 Find Live Bulb

To find the Live Bulb setting, you'll need to adjust the shutter speed beyond the longest timed setting available. Trigger the shutter – use a cable release to avoid camera shake. The Olympus release has a lock setting, which is handy for very long exposures.



### 3 Mechanical shutter

Pay attention to the histogram and watch it move to the right as the exposure 'develops'. Make sure you end the exposure before any of the highlight details are lost – in other words, before the histogram moves off the right-hand edge of the display.





© PAUL GOLDSTEIN

cheetah pursuing a fleet-footed gazelle across fertile oat grass will be picked up at 1/1600sec at f/8 quite easily and give a good record of the action. Taken at 1/40sec it is a different matter, but the potential for success is a seductive narcotic.

### Background is critical

However, it is not all about action. With portraits I approach things very differently. Unless it is an extremely rare animal, at least 80% of the photograph is down to the background. Therefore, depth of field is critical, and that is where shooting aperture priority is vital. I'm still old fashioned with ISO, and despite being assured that new pro cameras can handle huge ISOs I am always looking to keep the figure as low as possible and therefore almost always shoot portraits wide open.

People talk about white balance and other settings, but I leave mine on AWB all the time and adjust if necessary, which is rare.

My camera probably has thousands of different settings and adjustments, and although I know only a few, I know them well enough to adjust by touch alone. This matters in wildlife situations that are fickle by their very nature.

You can have the best camera and lens, know every facet and characteristic of both, and still be unable to create compelling images. Knowledge is good, but your own particular stamp on your images is far more important.

People want to see your own work, not plagiarised creations. You must gamble and be prepared to fail. Only in that way will you get close to your goal.



# Wildlife

If you want to take exceptional shots of fast-moving wildlife, you need to handle your settings by touch, says **Paul Goldstein**

MOUNTAINS of literature have been written about the minutiae of camera settings. It seems that every new camera has an advanced lexicon of controls and fine-tuning menus that defeat even the most pedantic of camera geeks. 'Is it sharp?' is the question I ask myself most after depressing the shutter release. So the focus settings are important, but in reality quite straightforward.

I only use three AF area selection modes: single-point AF; AF point

expansion (focus using one manually selected point, assisted by four other AF points); and zone AF, as it's perfect for birds against an even sky or background.

The advances in AF tracking are now so good that you have little excuse for failure – unless your quarry is running through dense vegetation. However, since most of the time I am trying to achieve movement with slow settings, my failure rate is higher than most. A



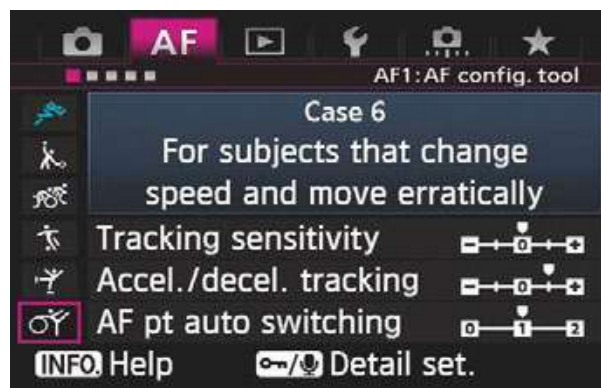
Paul Goldstein's jobs consist of cramming in a full-time career with a tour operator, owning four safari camps in Kenya, guiding all over the world and fund-raising for tigers and other persecuted species. So he's perfectly placed to take photographs. [paulgoldstein.co.uk](http://paulgoldstein.co.uk)

## PAUL'S SET-UP ON HIS CANON EOS MODELS



### 1 Initial settings

When I go out on a game drive, I always have my default AF setting at AI Servo, with single-point AF selected and about ISO 500, one-third underexposed and on multiple shots. This means I am completely ready in case something ambushes the game drive.



### 2 AF configuration

The AF Configuration Tool has six presets with three different parameter combinations. Case 6 (for subjects that change speed and move erratically) seems to work extremely well, but I will be frank, they are all good on both my Canon EOS-1D X and 7D Mark II.



### 3 Lens stabilisation

When setting the Optical Image Stabiliser mode on my Canon lenses, I like to use Mode 1 for most subjects, Mode 2 for general movement and Mode 3 (which is not available on all lenses) for fast chases. They all seem to work very well.





© MICHAEL WAYNE PLANT

is as far to the right as possible without blowing the highlights. It's interesting to see when you expose to the right just how much better the information is. There is much more detail in the shadow areas.

## Zebra overlay

The Zebra Overlay is a useful tool that allows you to look in the viewfinder and check whether your highlights are clipping. Basically, you can set the camera to warn you when an area is completely white, or almost completely white.

I set it to 100+, which means it warns me when any area of my image is 100% white. You can set it to 95+ if you want, but I find this to be too active, giving me too much information that I don't really need. At 100+ it just tells me when I'm clipping my highlights, which is enough for me.

## Why manually focus?

I'm specifically talking about street work here, but it can apply to many types of photography. For me, the reason to focus manually is speed. It means I'm not trying to prescribe where my focus point is – after all, I can't tell that until the scene is right in front of me, and no camera is quick enough to shift the focus point to the point of interest.

Focus tracking is all well and good, but it still requires you to point your camera at your point of interest, which for my street work is a disadvantage.

I like to pre-focus for distance, and guess the distance to my subject. Over time, you can get quite good at this, especially with the focus distance displayed on the screen or in the viewfinder.



Michael Wayne Plant has been a photographer since 1988 and has worked in a variety of genres that have all influenced his aesthetic style. He is currently the lead photography lecturer at Idea Store Learning in East London, which offers adult courses. [michaelwayneplant.com](http://michaelwayneplant.com)

# Street and portrait

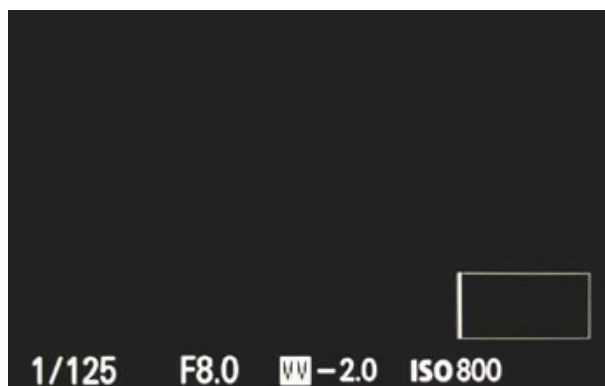
The most important setting on the Sony Alpha 7 II is the histogram for judging exposure, says **Michael Wayne Plant**

WHEN setting up my Alpha 7 II, the most important tool is the histogram. I need to have my colour style set to neutral in order for it to be accurate, and as the histogram reads from the JPEG file, rather than from the raw file, setting the colours so they are as flat as possible means I get a truer representation

of the histogram and the tones in the scene. It's therefore also vital to get your white balance as accurate as possible, as that too can have an effect on your histogram.

I completely ignore my camera's meter reading, instead using the histogram to judge my exposure, making sure that most of the graph

## MICHAEL'S SET-UP ON THE SONY ALPHA 7 II



### 1 Histogram

I like to clear the display on the electronic viewfinder so that it only shows the histogram and the exposure settings along the bottom of the screen. This is all I need when shooting. All other information can be displayed on the rear display.



### 2 Magnification

I set Custom Button 1 to operate the magnification pull-up, so if I want to zoom in manually to focus accurately, it's there. Press once and it zooms in, press twice and it zooms in even closer. I tend to press just once as that means I still have focus peaking.



### 3 Deactivate Monitor

The C3 button can be set to have the monitor on the back deactivated. This means that I can work without the back screen displaying anything, which is especially helpful when shooting in low light as it means I won't draw attention to myself.





AF focus tracking set at 3 out of 5 (normal). I have notched this back from the faster 4 or 5, which you think would be better for sports photography, but the lens has a tendency to hunt, or pop in and out of focus, because the AF is acting too quickly.

Both Canon and Nikon have new prime telephoto lenses, and if you are lucky enough to have one of these you could move the focus tracking up to 4.

### Back-button focusing

I have my focus activation on the back AF-ON button (this is usually the first custom function that I change when I pick up a new camera), which I activate with my thumb – I don't use the shutter-release button on the front of the camera. This gives me more control over the AF; I can use my thumb to stop or start AF as required.

For example, when photographing a football player running through a group of players, you activate the AF with your thumb. If the assistant referee runs in front of the camera, you can stop the AF, then start it again when he or she has moved out of frame.

I always have my camera on continuous autofocus and not on single shot. In sport, the subject matter is usually continuously darting around at high speed, and you therefore need the AF to be on all the time.

I make sure I have AF-C priority selection set at Release + focus. In burst mode, priority is given to focus for the first frame, and to release for subsequent frames, ensuring that the burst frame rate does not slow down.

AP

# Sports

Fine-tuning is an ongoing process, says action artist **Andy Hooper**

SPORTS photographers are very competitive, but we do share lots of information when it comes to camera set-ups. This is especially true if a new camera comes out – everyone quickly experiments with different settings and then shares their findings so we all end up with the optimum settings. The fine-tuning, though, is an ongoing process.

As a sports/action photographer I have my camera set up with speed

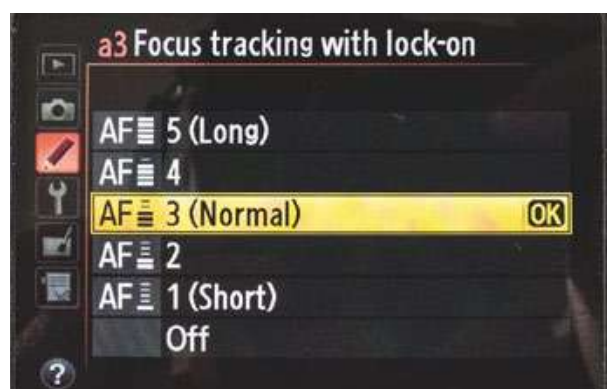
in mind – speed of use, and speed of capture. The autofocus settings are the most critical custom settings to get right, as these play such a large part in sports photography.

Keeping up with the action, following it and capturing it, have become easier and easier thanks to the advancement of AF systems in cameras. However, to get the best results I have a few ultimate autofocus tips, such as having my



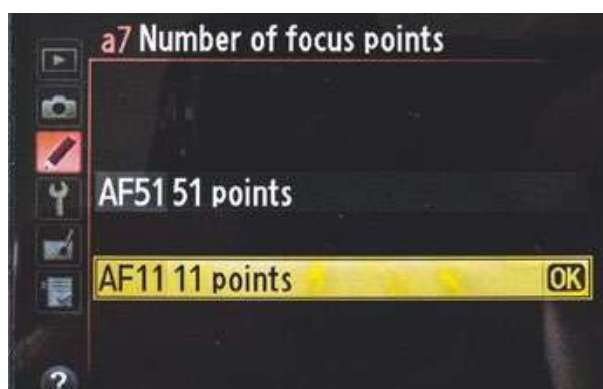
Andy Hooper has photographed many of the world's greatest athletes, and documented major sporting events, for more than 20 years. He has won numerous awards and has covered the past four Olympic Games.  
[andyhooper.co.uk](http://andyhooper.co.uk)

## ANDY'S GENERAL SET-UP



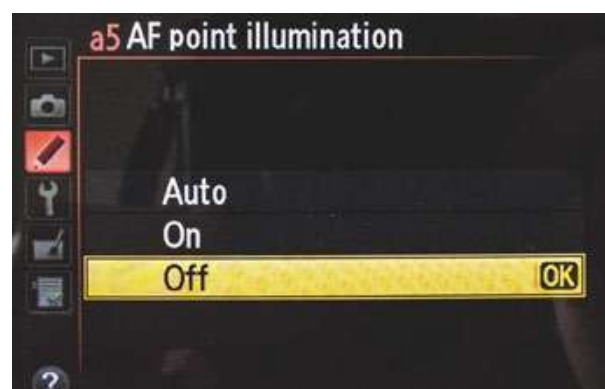
### 1 Focusing

I set the camera's AF activation via the AF-ON button only. I then like to have my AF focus tracking set at 3 (Normal) to avoid the AF being over-sensitive, while having the AF-C priority selection set as Release + focus to maintain burst speed.



### 2 AF points

I have the number of focus points set at 11 and not the 51 available. This, again, gives me more control and keeps the important point of focus on my subject, such as a footballer. At 51 focus points, control is taken away from me and given to the camera – which is never a good thing!



### 3 Shooting menus

I make sure I have all HDR, D-Lighting, high ISO and sharpening settings turned off, as I prefer to add these in afterwards if I need them. I also like to have the focus-point illumination turned off, as I find the light in the camera viewfinder distracting.



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## LETTER OF THE WEEK

### The delight factor

I was interested to read Bob Newman's article on the Leica Q (12 September). His justification for spending a 'ridiculous' amount of money on a camera almost got me reaching for my credit card. However, it set me thinking about the cameras I have had over a lifetime and reviewing their delight factor. Certainly the Leica M6 was included in this, which I had for 20 years.


In the 1950s and '60s I lusted after a Rolleiflex but never got one, making do with a Microcord. My much-used and liked first SLR, a Pentax H2, was great to use, but I cannot describe it as having the delight factor. Its successor, a Contax RTS, came nearer, but still did not match the Leica. For 30 years my daily tool of the trade was a Hasselblad C/CM 500 and a more versatile, reliable camera I could not

have used – but delight, no. It was a tool.

My current camera that does have the delight factor is the Fujifilm X100S, which combines so many must-have features with excellent design. The other camera that has it for me is a Gandolfi. I bought it new in 1979, but it is unchanged from the design first introduced early in the 20th century.

**Ian Gee, Gloucestershire**

**That is quite a list of cameras, and all of them are fantastic in their own right. When technology and great design merge into one, the experience of using a camera can be fantastic, and often hard to replicate if you have to upgrade or replace it – Richard Sibley, deputy editor**



# Win!

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### Ship-shape shot

I'd be honoured to see my photograph of the SS *Great Britain* in AP. The image (right) was taken using my Nikon D800 and 24-70mm lens at dawn. I arrived at the ship before sunrise and used a tripod with a cable release and a Lee 0.6 grad filter to balance the sky. However, the original image lacked impact, so I decided to try the Lee Big Stopper, which, as your articles often recommend, improved it a lot.

**Gary West, via email**

**Good job! And nice use of the Lee Big Stopper ND filter – Richard Sibley, deputy editor**

### The gig's up

The rules that surround what cameras you're allowed to take into gigs at venues like the O2 Arena in London have made this a niche area that seems to still be poorly



Gary West's shot of the SS *Great Britain* in Bristol

© GARY WEST

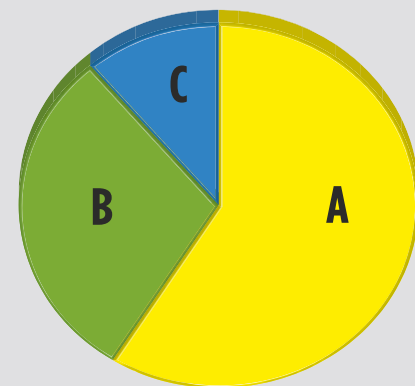
addressed by the market.

I started with a Canon PowerShot G10 because of its low-light sensitivity (with a maximum ISO of 3,200). It wasn't long before the lack of a long zoom made me look for an alternative.

I chose the Sony Cyber-shot HX50 because of its 30x zoom, but its maximum ISO of 800 makes it only barely adequate. To put it into perspective, if you're sitting in

the front row at the O2 arena a 30x zoom will get you a headshot. Sit much further back and at 30x you'll get a full body shot.

The problem is the light sensitivity. Even with the camera's shake reduction, at 30x zoom, shooting at maximum aperture and 1/60sec, I still have to throw a distressingly large number of shots away because of motion blur and feel like



### In AP 5 September we asked...

Has another photographer ever got in your way or ruined your shot?

#### You answered...

<b>A</b> Yes, but not often. I find that most photographers have an understanding with each other	<b>59%</b>
<b>B</b> Yes, it happens all the time	<b>30%</b>
<b>C</b> No, this hasn't been an issue	<b>11%</b>

#### What you said

'In my experience most "serious" photographers are aware of others and try to stay out of the way, or wait until I have finished, and I would do likewise. It is the mobile phone/iPad brigade and tourist 'happy snappers' who are the most inconsiderate'

'I was taking some shots of deer in a deer park once, shooting into the sun because I wanted silhouettes. As I walked (a long way) around the deer to get a shot with the sun behind me, I passed another couple who had been taking pictures. They were talking in very loud whispers to make sure I heard, because they were complaining that I had been ruining their shots. So no, but I guess I've ruined other people's'

'Never. The only person who can ruin your shot is you. I've managed that a few times'

#### This week we ask

Do you ever ask another photographer what settings they have used?

Vote online [www.amateurphotographer.co.uk](http://www.amateurphotographer.co.uk)

### Guess the date



Every other week we post an old AP cover on our Facebook page and all you have to do is guess the issue date (day/month/year). To guess the date of this cover (above), head over to [www.facebook.com/Amateur.photographer.magazine](http://www.facebook.com/Amateur.photographer.magazine). Forum members can also enter via the Forum.



The camera in the 5 September issue is the Canon Demi, launched in 1963. The first person drawn at random who correctly guessed this make and model is Bill Ward



most of the remaining shots would be sharper if I could shoot at a faster shutter speed with a larger ISO setting.

But the manufacturers still seem to be keeping the ISO 12,800 sensors for compact cameras with smaller zoom levels. What can I do?

**Chris Jack, via email**

**The problem with creating that camera is physics and current technology. A greater sensor sensitivity requires larger photosites, which means either a larger sensor or a lower resolution. Larger sensors mean bigger cameras and lower resolutions mean fewer sales as the public feels they aren't getting value from their new camera. It's the same with the lens. To zoom closer you need a larger lens. You would also have a smaller maximum aperture, and to make the aperture larger you need, yes, a larger lens – Richard Sibley, deputy editor**

## Contax connoisseur

I enjoyed Ian Burley's column on the Contax SL300R T\* digital camera in AP 5 September. There is, however, a major error in the piece in which Ian refers to the Contax SL300R T\* being marketed as



Some of Graham Buxton-Smith's Contax digital kit

the Kyocera Finecam SL300R in the USA – it was not. The Kyocera Finecam was different in two major respects, something reflected in its \$100 lower price at the time. Only the Contax used a Zeiss zoom lens – the T\* in the camera's model name refers to the famed T\* coating on Zeiss lenses. Also, the Finecam could not take a filter (although this was later remedied in the Finecam SL400R), as its lens was flush, while the Contax had a facility for mounting a 28mm filter. The image quality of the Kyocera is generally acknowledged not to be quite as good as the Contax – poorer contrast being the main criticism, which is probably as a result of the absence of the T\* coating.

Curiously, the Finecam lens didn't use Yashica's proprietary ML coating as an alternative, which might well have rectified the issue.

I carry either the Contax SL300RT or the Contax i4R with me every day as both fit inside a normal pocket and start up in under a second. Picture quality is fine under good lighting and the macro facility on both cameras is excellent. As these cameras are increasingly rare I grab one whenever I can, as spares no longer exist. Sadly, a few people who assumed the electronics were identical have tried to use the Finecam firmware in the Contax and vice versa; the result is usually a camera-shaped paperweight!

Any chance of Ian Burley doing a piece on the i4R in a future issue? It's a design icon. Incidentally, I've included an image of some of my Contax digital gear (above left).

**Graham Buxton-Smith, via email**

**That is a nice selection of Contax gear! As for a column on the i4R, I'll put the suggestion to Ian. Watch out for Ian and Ivor's other classic camera columns, as you never know what will pop up – Richard Sibley, deputy editor**

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## In next week's issue On sale Tuesday 29 September



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Forget what you know about front-to-back sharpness and learn how a smaller depth of field can improve your landscape images

## APOY 2015

We've Sigma prizes worth more than £1,000 in our Black & White round

## Canon XC10

Richard Sibley tells us what it's like to use Canon's hybrid 4K video and stills camera

## Olympus 8mm f/1.8 fisheye

We try out the Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 8mm f/1.8 Fisheye PRO





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**Joe Cornish – Smooth Cotton 300**

I aim to crystallise the endlessly varied light, colours and texture of nature in my landscape photographs. At the end of a chain of photographic processes, the print is the culmination and fulfilment of that effort, and the paper is critical to the success of the print. Fotospeed's Smooth Cotton 300 is my paper of choice.



**Trevor & Faye Yerbury – Natural Soft Textured Bright White 315**

As traditional darkroom printers it has taken us many years to discover the right paper for our digital images that will capture and hold all of the shadow and highlight detail we demand. Natural Soft Textured Bright White is our preferred paper.



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**John Swannell – Platinum Baryta 300**

As a photographer I aim to capture the spirit of my subject. While technology has changed over the years the one thing I feel remains the same is the importance of the printed image. Fotospeed's Platinum Baryta bridges the gap between the traditional darkroom papers and today's digital media. I find that whilst it is known for reproducing superb B&W images it should never be underestimated as a paper for colour work.



**Charlie Waite – Platinum Etching 285**

Landscape photography is much about discovery and photographers can only fully relish the rewards of their efforts when seen in the form of a print. The paper used for that print has to be as carefully considered as the image made. Discovering Fotospeed's Platinum Etching 285 has been a revelation to me and has proved a vital tool in my ongoing quest to match pre-visualisation with end result.



© SARAH KELMAN



## Wild Woods - Highly Commended Sarah Kelman Sparring Partners

‘Scottish landowners offer supplementary feed to the red deer in winter in the native pine woodlands,’ says Sarah of this dramatic and wintry shot taken on the Alvie

Estate in Inverness-shire. ‘While these young stags were waiting for their dinner they practised flexing their muscles, just as the snow began to fall.’

© MAX MORE

## Animal Portraits - Highly Commended Max More

### Waiting for the Next Meal

‘While walking the coastal path eastwards from Rhossili [on the Gower Peninsula in West Glamorgan], I spotted this solitary cormorant on a rock, but even with a 600mm lens it was initially beyond usable reach,’ says Max. ‘The challenge was to close in on the subject without scaring it off. To do this I moved very slowly, taking photographs at regular points. When I was as close as I could get, it was then a matter of waiting for a flattering profile to present itself.’

# wild things

AP takes a look at some of the most exciting images from this year's **British Wildlife Photography Awards**





**Black & White -  
Highly Commended  
Simon Anderson**  
Starfish

⬆ 'My daughter saw this starfish being washed up on the tide,' says Simon. 'I knew this would make a great picture, but capturing it was not easy due to the tide moving the subject. I knew my best shot was to capture it as the water receded, leaving the starfish in place while showing the motion of the water.'

**Urban Wildlife -  
Winner  
Tomos Brangwyn**  
London Starling Gang

✓ 'I placed a fisheye lens in a London car park favoured by starlings during the winter,' says Tomos. 'Using a remote trigger and flash I sought an eye-level view as I wanted to bring out some of their cheeky and curious character.'





**Habitat - Highly Commended**  
**David Tipling**  
Frog with Spawn

✓ 'This spring-fed pond offered the perfect opportunity to take this split-level shot,' says David. 'The challenge was getting close to the frogs that dived as soon as I entered the pond.'



© DAVID TIPLING

**Animal Behaviour - Highly Commended**  
**Robert E Fuller**  
No Room for Sharing

➤ Robert enticed a female sparrowhawk to his garden and fed her for six months. That was until a more aggressive female launched an attack and took over.



© ROBERT E FULLER

**Animal Portraits - Highly Commended**  
**Oscar Dewhurst**  
Focused

'I had followed this fox family for a month or so, spending every weekend and free afternoon I had with them,' says Oscar. 'As a result, they were so used to seeing me that my presence never bothered them. In this case, one fox let me sit no more than three metres away while it hunted.'



© OSCAR DEWHURST





© IZZY STANBRIDGE

### Hidden Britain - Highly Commended Izzy Standbridge Flower Power

‘I found this large garden snail in perfect condition with a beautiful shell and decided to take him to my “snail studio” for a photo shoot,’ says Izzy. ‘He was very cooperative and travelled around among the flowers for a minute or two before slithering away.’

### Animal Portraits - Winner William Harvey Common Lizard

‘Working with a wideangle lens meant getting very close, and it took a lot of patience and a number of failed attempts to get any photos,’ says William. ‘I manually focused the lens to its closest focusing point, then, holding the camera with one hand and a flash with the other, very slowly moved towards the lizard.’

© WILLIAM HARVEY







**Urban Wildlife –  
Highly Commended  
Damian Kuzdak**  
London at Night

‘Parks in London are not only wonderful places to pass the time, but also a home for many animals like the wood mouse,’ says Damian. ‘This night image shows the wood mouse feeding on the waste thrown from cars next to the busy London roads.’

**Habitat Winner and  
Overall 2015 Winner  
Barrie Williams**  
On the Edge

‘While visiting Noss, I was blown away by the sheer volume of gannets surrounding me,’ says Barrie. ‘I studied the scene, soaking in the seabird orchestra and thinking about how to convey this. Looking down, it appeared that the gannets below looked like stars against the dark backdrop of the sea.’

**Animal portraits –  
Highly Commended  
Sandra Price**

**Winter on the Moors**  
‘This image was one I had envisaged for a while. I knew where to go for the bare heather stems; it was just a matter of waiting and hoping that Nature would provide an opportunity,’ says Sandra. ‘With patience, I eventually found this female perched not far from the roadside.’

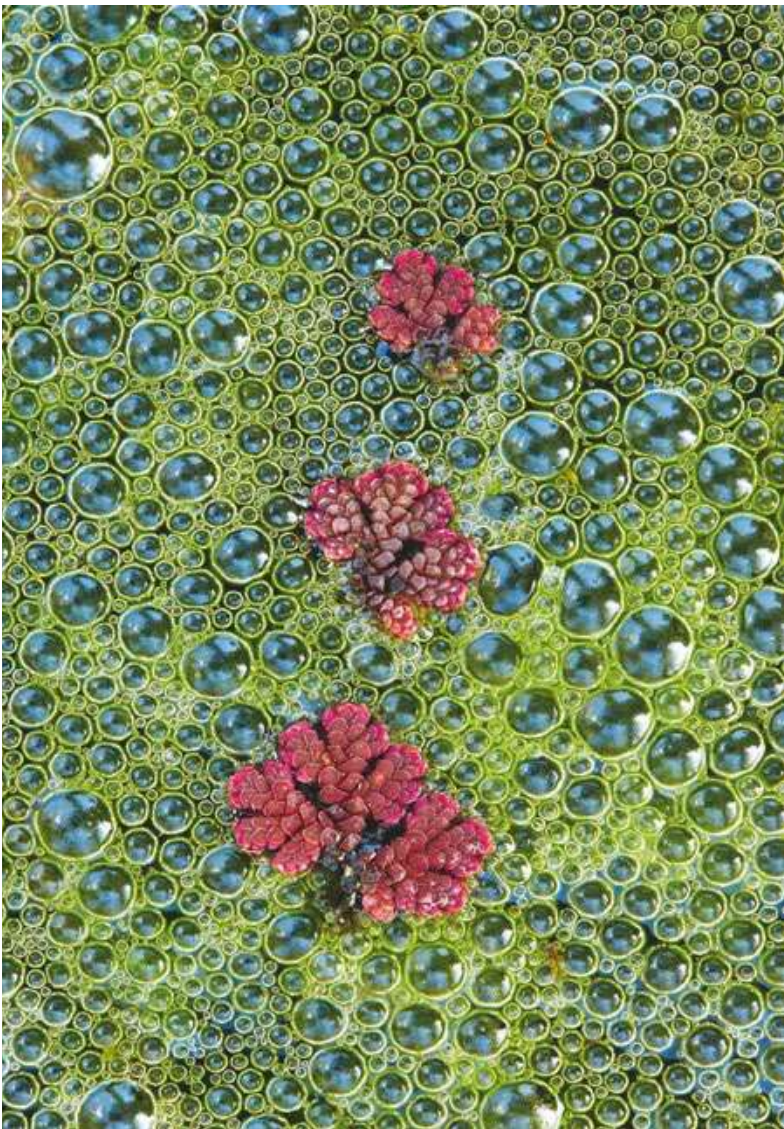






© TIM HUNT

© SANDRA PRICE



**Botanical Britain  
- Winner Tim Hunt  
Fairy Moss**

◀ ‘My eye was drawn to the carpet of green algae that covered the pond,’ says Tim. ‘The bubbles provided an interesting texture, but the potential image needed another element. After searching around the pond, I came across this fairy moss that added colour and an ideal focal point.’

**Hidden Britain -  
Highly Commended  
Ross Hoddinott  
Moonlit Demoiselle**

✓ ‘I often visit local wetlands at daybreak to photograph insects,’ says Ross. ‘I found this male on a reed with his wings open. I shot it against the rising sun, but later processed it with a cool blue cast to create the impression of moonlight.’

Visit [www.bwpawards.org](http://www.bwpawards.org) to see the complete list of winners and their images. The book, *British Wildlife Photography Awards: Collection 6*, is published by AA Publishing, priced £25



© ROSS HODDINOTT



# LOCATION GUIDE

# St Abb's Head

If you want a dramatic coastline, this reserve in the Scottish Borders is a great location, as **Jon Gibbs** explains



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**Above: Horsecastle Bay is a wonderful array of cliffs and sea stacks at St Abb's Head Nature Reserve**



**Right: Pettico Wick is also worth a visit, with the small bay offering plenty of photo opportunities**

ST ABB'S Head is a rocky promontory in the Scottish Borders. It is a national nature reserve that is managed by the National Trust for Scotland. With its stunning cliff-top vistas, impressive geological features and beautiful bays, populated with sea stacks sitting in an azure-toned sea, it is sheer heaven for the coastal photographer and you will be spoilt for choice. If your interests also include wildlife, the reserve will not disappoint. Seabirds are in abundance, with huge colonies of kittiwakes, guillemots and razorbills.

St Abb's is easy to get to, with a turning off the A1 approximately ten miles north of Berwick-upon-Tweed. Just before you get to the village of St Abb's there is an area where you can park your car, although this will involve a long walk to the reserve – so be warned! Alternatively, take the small private road to the reserve itself, which is fine to use, and park at the top of the cliffs.

On the way to the cliff car park you pass Pettico Wick, a small bay that is well worth stopping off to photograph. It has an old pier and sea stack with stunning views along the cliffs of the coast, just north of the reserve.

If you park at the top of the cliffs you're then spoilt for choice. Walk either way over the undulating, but not too steep terrain, and you will find many possibilities and viewpoints. Be extra careful on the cliff edges, though, and only shoot from a safe and secure vantage point, of which there are plenty.



## Jon Gibbs

Jon Gibbs is an award-winning landscape photographer and gallery owner from Norfolk. [www.jon-gibbs.co.uk](http://www.jon-gibbs.co.uk)

ALL PICTURES © JON GIBBS

## KIT LIST



### ▲ Torch or head torch

The cliffs are rather perilous, so a torch is ideal to make sure you can see your route and the terrain at the extremes of the day.



### ▼ Lee Filters Big or Little Stopper

These filters are great to use in images where there are cliffs and sea stacks. The softness of smoothed-out water is a great contrast to the jagged rock in your composition.



### ◀ Tripod support

Try to hang something from the tripod centre column on a bungee cord to reduce the possibility of camera shake as the cliffs can be very windy. It may be worth considering tripod spikes for extra stability.



## Shooting advice

### Time to visit

I would suggest that St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve is an all-year-round destination for photographers. I find that the dramatic winter weather suits the location perfectly, but there are also many possibilities for more subtle work, such as studies of the geology or long-exposures. Early summer brings thrift to the cliff edges, so combine their pink hues with the beautiful colour of the sea for stunning vistas.


I think the best shooting location is Horsecastle Bay, which is an array of wonderfully jagged cliffs and sea stacks located about a 20-minute walk from the car park heading in the direction of St Abb's village. The real beauty of this nature reserve is its wealth of possibilities.

Any time of day would be fine to shoot, as you have so many different viewpoints in all directions, so it's perfect from dawn to sunset, but check the position of the sun first.

I find an all-purpose wideangle zoom more than suitable for most of the images, although it would also be worth taking a 70-200mm to shoot along the cliffs and compress all their wonderful shapes.

### Food and lodging

There are a couple of cafés in St Abb's village itself, but there are more facilities and a couple of pubs if you fancy a meal in nearby Coldingham, which is a short drive (or walk along the coast, if you're feeling energetic). Lodging in Coldingham ranges from B&Bs to small hotels, but for a wider choice you might well consider basing yourself in Berwick-upon-Tweed, which also has a handy Travelodge located just off the A1.



If you visit in early summer, you have the bonus of seeing beautiful thrift on the cliff edges



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# APOY 2015 Amateur Photographer OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

## ON THE STREET

APOY Round 6, **On the Street**, was perhaps our strongest round so far. Here are the top 30 images

**J**evgenijs Scolokovs from Latvia is the winner of our On the Street round of APOY 2015. He takes home a Sigma dp2 Quattro compact digital camera and VF-41 viewfinder accessory. For the dp2 Quattro, Sigma rethought and redesigned every aspect of the camera, including the sensor, engine, lens and body. While retaining its famous textural expression, the Foveon direct image sensor produces images that are colourful, rich and deep.

Unique among image sensors, the Foveon Direct image sensor is similar to traditional colour film in that its multiple layer captures all the information that visible light transmits. Along with Sigma's proprietary image-processing technology, this sensor produces excellent resolution, precise gradation and gorgeous colour.

Thanks to its optimised design featuring a fixed focal length lens and integrated body, the dp2 Quattro offers both sensor and lens performance at a very high level. The result leaves you with

full-bodied image quality. The dp2 Quattro body offers a balanced shape, layout and weight distribution. Its complete and robust specification allows the photographer to concentrate fully on photography itself and leverage the camera's potential to produce outstanding images.

The dp2 Quattro has a fast 30mm f/2.8 (45mm equivalent) standard lens. It's a simple but powerful optic and sensor combination that delivers medium-format-level image quality. The dp2 Quattro also features the newly developed TRUE II image-processing engine.

Jevgenijs also receives an external optical viewfinder. The Albada inversed Galilean type VF-41 viewfinder mounts on the hotshoe of the Sigma dp2 Quattro compact digital camera. The viewfinder offers a framing guide for deciding the composition without the colour LCD monitor and accurate framing unaffected by external light conditions. That's a total prize value of £1,079.98.



1st

### 1 Jevgenijs Scolokovs Latvia 50pts

Olympus OM-D E-M10, 40-150mm, 1/200sec at f/4.5, ISO 200

Street photography is an immensely popular genre, and that means every year APOY is flooded with entries, all of which offer diverse and unique interpretations of the brief. That can sometimes make it a little difficult to select a winner, but this month the judges agreed that Jevgenijs's image of children playing in the street was to take the top spot. It's a great capture, and one that is full of life and colour. It is also perfectly timed.



### 2 Graeme Youngson Aberdeen 49pts

Canon EOS 70D, 10-18mm, 1/640sec at f/7.1, ISO 400

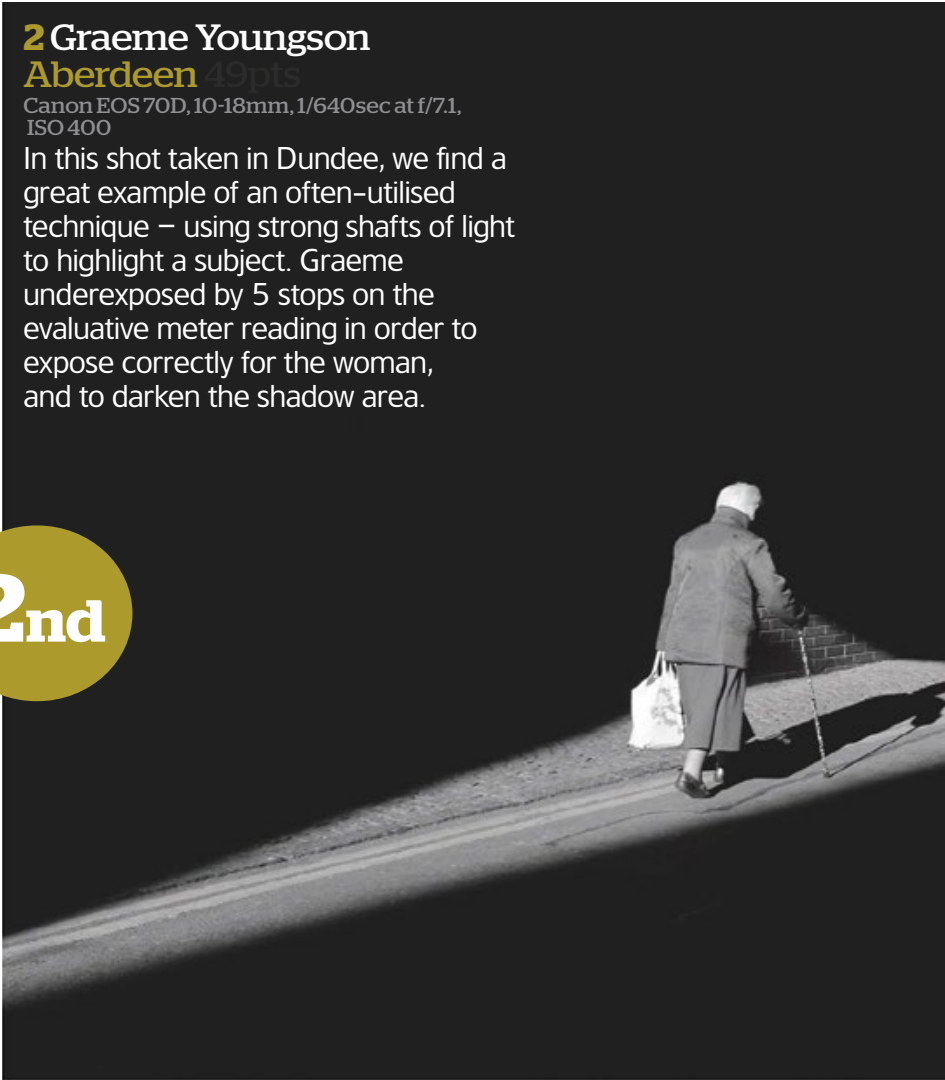
In this shot taken in Dundee, we find a great example of an often-utilised technique – using strong shafts of light to highlight a subject. Graeme underexposed by 5 stops on the evaluative meter reading in order to expose correctly for the woman, and to darken the shadow area.

2nd

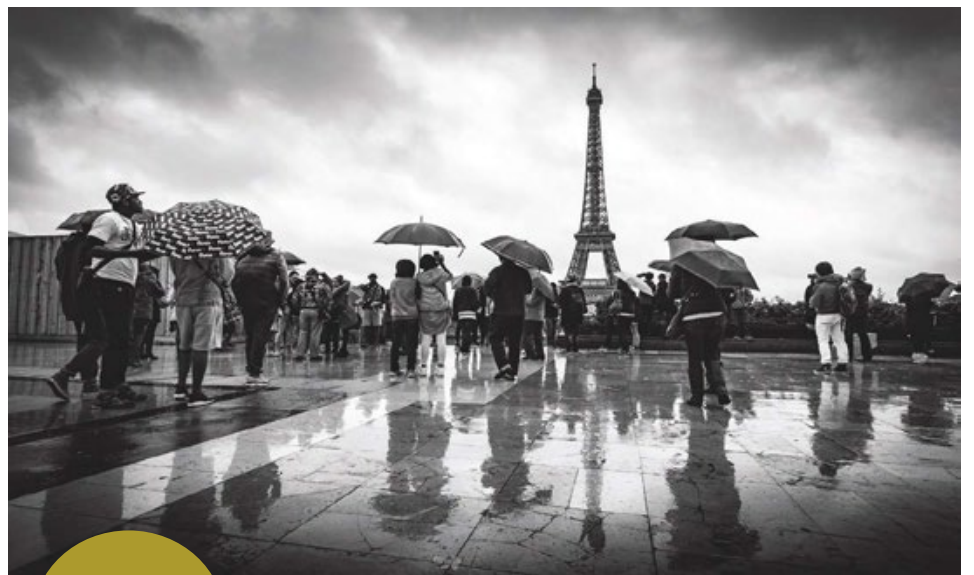
## The 2015 leaderboard

Due to an oversight in last month's competition, Lee Acaster's entry from that month has been discounted. However, he remains in first place followed by Chris Evans who leaps to second place. David Queenan has also jumped up a few places to third place.

1	Lee Acaster	143pts	6	Penny Halsall	102pts
2	Chris Evans	131pts	7	Adele Spencer	108pts
3	David Queenan	116pts	8	Graeme Youngson	100pts
4	Graham Borthwick	114pts	9	Tomer Eliash	100pts
5	Matt Parry	113pts	10	Aaron Bennett	98pts







3rd

### 3 Matt Parry Cheshire 48pts

Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 16-35mm, 1/200sec at f/9, ISO 100

Shots of Paris are a dime a dozen, so it takes a special image to stand out from the crowd. Here we find a multi-layered shot featuring the French capital's iconic Eiffel Tower. Matt has created an image featuring several visual tiers: the sky, the crowd, the ground and the reflections. All these layers are held in place by the pin of the tower – the key element that keeps our eye fixed on the image. The fact that the picture is black & white serves to simplify the confusion of all these competing elements.



**4 Stuart Meikle Tyne and Wear 47pts**

Pentax K10D, 70mm, 1/8sec at f/8, ISO 100

Stuart handheld his camera for this shot of a food vendor in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The 1/8sec shutter gave him sufficient blur to capture the passing motorbike

**5 Jennifer Downing Berkshire 46pts**

Canon EOS 450D, 80mm, 1/800sec at f/13, ISO 800

Jennifer has captured a shot that is perfectly composed and framed. She has also waited patiently for just the right group of subjects to cycle their way into view

**6 Justin Cliffe Surrey 45pts**

Fujifilm X100S, 23mm, 1/60sec at f/5.6, ISO 640

'I saw the curving lines of the railings and then waited for the right person to come along,' says Justin. 'This person helped by looking right, into the frame, thereby enabling the light to catch his face'

**7 George Fisk Kent 44pts**

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 17-40mm, 1/200sec at f/5, ISO 2,500

As George points out, the conversion to monochrome accentuates the marks and dirt staining the glass

**8 Pat Burns Ireland 43pts**

Canon EOS 400D, 18-55mm, 1/60sec at f/4.5, ISO 400

This picture was taken in Cork City, Ireland, from Pat's hotel window. The wheelchair parking sign resembles a figure looking out onto the street at the passers-by

**9 Ron See Australia 42pts**

Sony Alpha 7, 55mm, 1/160sec at f/1.8, ISO 1,000

Ron has happened across a great scene here that almost looks as if it could have been taken from the pages of a fashion magazine

**10 Chris Evans London 41pts**

Nikon D800, 24-70mm, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 400

Chris's image is a fantastic example of what a patient photographer can achieve with street photography. The dropped ice-cream cone and its placement within the right of the frame is a brilliant element

**11 Dani Noguera East Riding of Yorkshire 40pts**

Canon EOS 7D, 50mm, 1/640sec at f/1.8, ISO 100

This bright image is of Dani's daughter the day before her first birthday

**12 Stephen Higgins East Riding of Yorkshire 39pts**

Olympus OM-D E-M1, 20mm, 1/3200sec at f/2, ISO 200

Stephen's futuristic-looking image, with its almost-hidden silhouette of a human figure, carries a feel of urban isolation and melancholy

**13 Hayri Kodal Turkey 38pts**

Sony Alpha 850, 75-210mm, 1/15sec at f/2.8, ISO 1,000

Hayri's image shows that not every shot has to be in focus. The image is full of atmosphere

**14 Javan Ng USA 37pts**

Nikon D750, 24-120mm, 1/500sec at f/11, ISO 100

This dynamic shot shows a couple strolling at Gantry Plaza State Park in Long Island City, with the view of Manhattan in the background

**15 David Fletcher Tyne and Wear 36pts**

Canon EOS 7D, 18-200mm, 1/500sec at f/6.3, ISO 1,250

This shot was taken at a market in Turkey. David has pointed out that much can be read into the gaze and body language of the stall owner. What exactly is she thinking about?









**16 Andrew Fusek Peters Shropshire 35pts**  
Canon EOS 6D, 16-35mm, 1/80sec at f/4.5, ISO 200

Andrew's shot, captured on a trip to Stockholm in Sweden, shows how a keen eye can reveal all manner of photographic opportunities

**17 Lorraine Heaysman West Sussex 34pts**  
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 24-105mm, 1/20sec at f/5.6, ISO 100

Here we see a pedestrian caught in the reflection of a parked car. It's a lovely interpretation of the street photography theme

**18 Tomer Eliash Israel 33pts**

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 16-35mm, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 200

In this intriguing image we find a young boy running away from the smoke at a religious Jewish ceremony

**19 Marco Gaia Italy 32pts**

Canon EOS 600D, 85mm, 1/800sec at f/2.2, ISO 400

You can almost feel the cold and wet in this rain-drenched image taken in Italy

**20 Hakan Olofsson Sweden 31pts**

Nikon D610, 70-200mm, 1/500sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

Hakan's image is deceptively simple. There are actually a number of recurring elements throughout the shot, such as the typography and patterns. The frame behind the central subject is also noteworthy

**21 Cristian Agostini Italy 30pts**

Nikon D300, 12-24mm, 1/60sec at f/6.3, ISO 500

Cristian was framing this shot when three perfect figures strolled into the scene

**22 Ian Cook Tyne and Wear 29pts**

Pentax SP1000, 50mm, Ilford FP4, ISO 400

Ian's shot has the appearance of an image taken by a post-war British photojournalist

**23 George Griffin London 28pts**

Nikon D5100, 18-55mm, 1/800sec at f/3.5, ISO 800

George's shot is a great example of the humour inherent in street photography

**24 Steve Beckett Buckinghamshire 27pts**

Nikon D7000, 50mm, 1/800sec at f/2, ISO 400

Steve's image contains depth and a masterful handling of tonal range

**25 Robert Dawkins Essex 26pts**

Canon EOS 6D, 24-105mm, 1/250sec at f/10, ISO 320

Robert's image was inspired by the paintings of Edward Hopper

**26 Anthony Into Philippines 25pts**

Nikon D7000, 12-24mm, 1/320sec at f/4.5, ISO 100

This image is so full of life and colour that it's difficult not to smile

**27 Ron Tear Essex 24pts**

Canon EOS 5D, 17-40mm, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 800

For this shot Ron stood in the freezing wind while commuters battled the elements

**28 Yasser Mobarak Egypt 23pts**

Nikon D3100, 50mm, 1/125sec at f/8, ISO 100

Here we find a woman in her house in the El-Max region of Alexandria in Egypt

**29 David Queenan West Lothian 22pts**

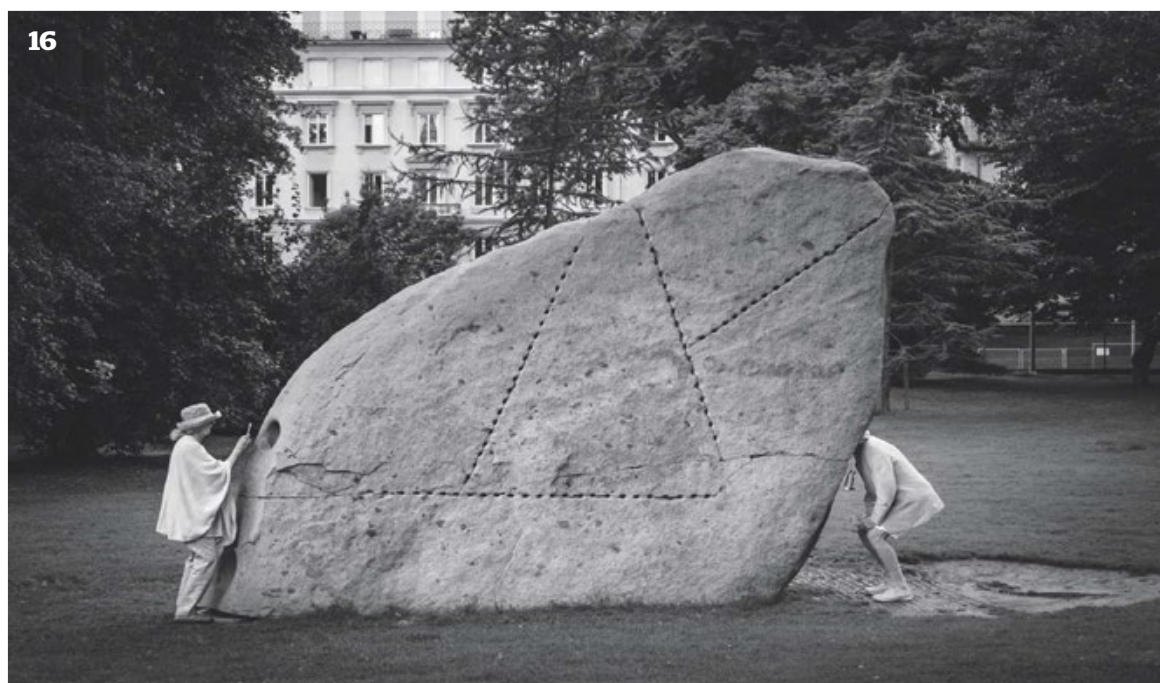
Nikon D610, 70-200mm, 1/800sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

David has used the lines of pillars to draw our attention to the subject of the man

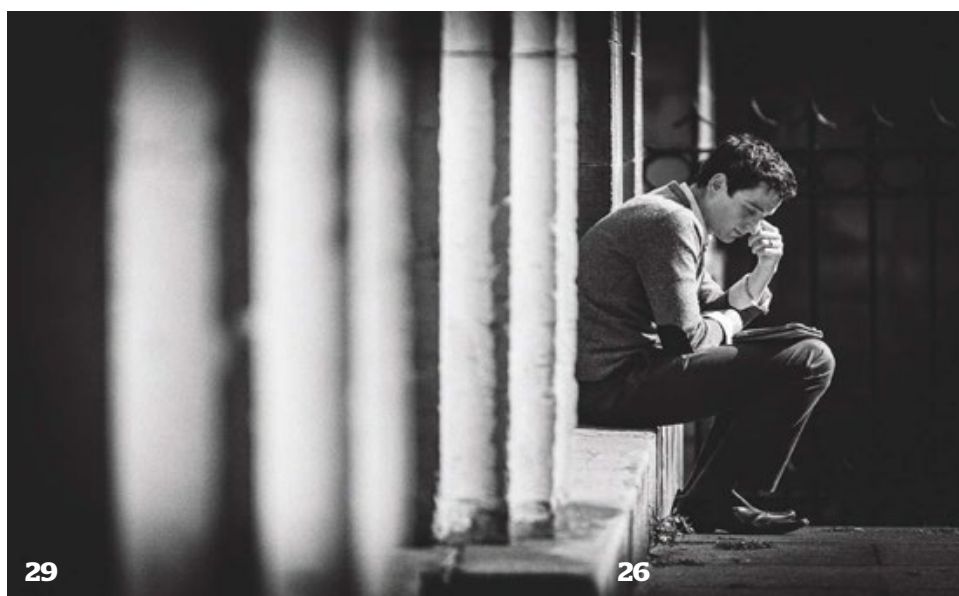
**30 Roj Whitelock Essex 21pts**

Olympus OM-D E-M1, 12-40mm, 1/500sec at f/5.6, ISO 200

Using a wideangle lens means Roj captured the scale of the '5' in relation to the man









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Photoshop guru **Martin Evening** sorts out your photo-editing and post-processing problems

## Creating a high-contrast portrait

I HAVE to admit this was quite a daunting challenge. I had to take Chris Evans' original raw file and work out what might have been done to achieve the final version Chris produced. The location in this photo is a fairly ordinary service corridor that was livened up by placing a direct flash head to the right and slightly above the head

height of the subject and synchronising this with a second head, placed further down the corridor and facing directly towards the camera with a strong blue gel on it. As you can imagine, a lot of steps were required to achieve the end result. Most of this was done by dodging and burning to produce a more dramatic lighting effect.

### Submit your images

Please see the 'Send us your pictures' section on page 3 for details or visit [www.amateurphotographer.co.uk](http://www.amateurphotographer.co.uk)

AFTER



BEFORE



### 1 Cropping and straightening

I needed to remove the fluorescent light directly above the man's head and tighten the crop to remove the corridor corner visible on the left. At the same time, it was necessary to go to the Lens Corrections panel to apply a Vertical Upright correction.

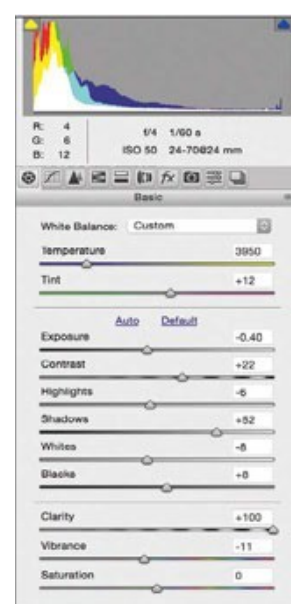


### 2 Add localised adjustments

In Camera Raw I used the Graduated Filter tool to apply a darkening Exposure adjustment to the top and right-hand side. I then used the Radial Filter tool to add a blue toning adjustment to the jacket, and an Exposure lightening plus Clarity boost on the face.

### 3 Apply basic panel tone adjustments

Normally I would go to the Basic panel, but in this instance I wanted to work on the light and shade first. At this stage only a few minor adjustments were needed to boost the global contrast. However, I set the Clarity to +100 in order to add more midtone contrast (in addition to the Clarity that was applied locally to the man's face).







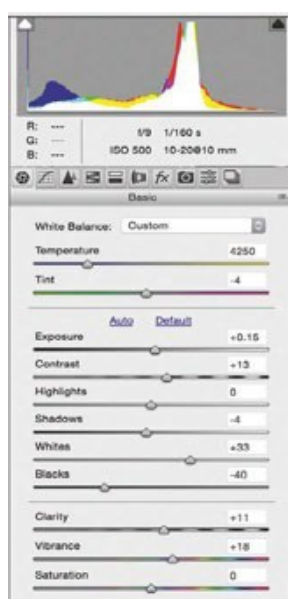
**AFTER**

## Dodging and burning

IT'S NOT often you get to see a rainbow as clearly as this. However, it seems there was a large object behind and to the left of photographer Chris Bennett that cast a shadow over the bottom-left section of the image, which needed lightening. At the same time, it's usually necessary to darken the sky slightly when shooting landscapes to balance the exposure of the sky with that of the land and match the edited photograph with how the scene was perceived. The main objective here was to use localised adjustment tools in Camera Raw to produce an image that more closely resembled how the scene appeared at the time the photograph was taken.

### 1 Crop the image

The first step was to tone adjust the image and add a bit more contrast. I did this by going to the Basic panel and clicked on the Auto button to auto-set the Basic panel settings. You'll notice here that I also manually set the White Balance sliders to apply a custom white balance and cropped the photo to ensure the horizon looked absolutely straight.



### 2 Lighten the railway lines

Having added more contrast, I noticed how this made the railway-line section at the bottom left go darker and appear somewhat lost in the shadows. To compensate for this, I selected the Adjustment brush and applied a localised Exposure lightening adjustment to the area that's shown highlighted here with a red overlay.



### 3 Darken the sky

While the Basic panel adjustments worked well for the railway tracks, fields and trees, the sky remained a little too light. I therefore selected the Graduated Filter tool and applied a darkening Exposure adjustment going from the middle of the sky to just below the horizon. This subtle adjustment helped make the rainbow stand out more.



## Adding Clarity to portraits

THE CLARITY slider is commonly used when processing landscape subjects to enhance the midtone contrast, or to compensate for the flattening effect that occurs when you compress the tonal range of a wide dynamic range subject. The Clarity slider can also be used to enhance the skin-tone contrast in portrait subjects. This first started when photographers experimented with

Photomatrix Pro to process single-exposure portrait images to achieve a gritty texture. The Clarity slider in Camera Raw and Lightroom can also be used to achieve this kind of look by applying the effect globally, or as a localised adjustment. In this portrait (left) you can compare the before and after versions where Clarity was added as a localised adjustment.

**Martin Evening** is a noted expert in both photography and digital imaging. He is well known in London for his fashion and beauty work, for which he has won several awards. Martin has worked with the Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom engineering teams over many years and is one of the founding members of a software design company. Visit [www.martinevening.com](http://www.martinevening.com)



# Accessories

Useful gadgets to enhance your photography, from phones to filters...

## Vanguard VEO 235AP tripod

£149 • [www.vanguardworld.co.uk](http://www.vanguardworld.co.uk)

Vanguard's VEO 235AP is a compact travel tripod with an innovative folding pan head that is ideal for video and spotting scopes. **Andrew Sydenham** tries it out

### At a glance

- Unique rapid column rotation for compact transportation and instant set-up
- Five-section aluminium-alloy legs with three angle options
- Compact two-way fluid pan-and-tilt head with retractable handle
- Low-angle shooting option
- Very strong leg locks

CRAFTED for the photographer who wants to travel, Vanguard's VEO 235AP, resplendent in its red and black anodised finish, is as good looking as it is practical. The compact size is made possible by the rapid rotating centre column that swings 180° to place the centre column and pan-and-tilt head between the tripod's legs, contributing to a folded length of just 14.9in (38cm).

The head takes a standard Arca plate, and I found it more than adequate for supporting mid-sized DSLRs and mirrorless cameras. The adjustable panning action is smooth and perfect for video work, as well as for holding binoculars or a spotting scope. Each leg has four strong snap-action locks, which allow a higher carrying capacity than other tripods of this type. The leg angle can be adjusted to three positions by a push button that is simple to operate. I like the inclusion of a short centre-column adapter, which gives photographers the option of capturing low-angle or macro images.

### Conclusion

The Vanguard VEO 235AP has all the features and qualities of an excellent travel tripod, and can easily attach to a small backpack or messenger bag if you don't want to use the included carry case. A soft rubber-grip handle on one leg ensures easy handling in any conditions and the folding head design contributes to the small and rugged nature of this tripod, which would be at home in most travel environments.

### Folding pan-and-tilt head

The two-way pan head, with Arca Swiss-compatible release plate, has a quick-fold handle that minimises the folded length of the tripod.

### Rotating centre column

The rapid column rotation ensures compact transportation and instant set-up.

### Legs and locks

The VEO 235AP has five-section aluminium-alloy legs, and strong snap locks for high load strength and easy height adjustment.

**Amateur  
Photographer  
Testbench  
Recommended**  
★★★★

### ALSO CONSIDER

#### Manfrotto Befree travel tripod ball head kit

£139, [www.manfrotto.co.uk](http://www.manfrotto.co.uk)

This tripod folds down to 15.75in (40cm) and has legs that can be spread independently, with two-position angle stops. The legs fold up around the ball head, making it compact.



#### Velbon Ultra 355 Tripod with three-way head

£89, [www.velbon.co.uk](http://www.velbon.co.uk)

With Velbon's trunnion shaft legs giving a compact folded size but decent working height, this model has a three-way pan-and-tilt head for stills and video.



#### Vanguard VEO 235AB

£99.99, [www.vanguardworld.co.uk](http://www.vanguardworld.co.uk)

If you like the look of the VEO 235AP but would prefer a tripod with ball head, consider the VEO 235AB instead. It is essentially the same tripod, fitted with Vanguard's TBH-50 head.





# Lenspen Peeps

• www.lenspen.com • £11.95



The Peeps' teardrop-shaped carbon pads help clean tricky corners

I FIND wearing glasses to be something of a pain when I'm taking photographs. If I wear them when I look through the camera's viewfinder I'm constantly pressing them up against the rubber eyepiece. If I adjust the dioptré so I can see sharply through the viewfinder without the glasses, then they're perched on top of my head. Either way, they're constantly dirty and I spend an inordinate amount of my time cleaning them. I have lens cloths everywhere.

If you recognise this problem, you'll be interested to learn of a device by Lenspen called Peeps. The Lenspen range, in case you aren't familiar, is based around the excellent glass-cleaning properties of carbon. The classic Lenspen uses a soft carbon pad on a stick, which safely picks up the dirt and grease on your lens rather than just moving it around.

Now, imagine taking a pair of those carbon pads and attaching them to the ends of a pair of tweezers, and that's effectively what you have with Peeps. The great thing about this device is that not only does the carbon pad clean really effectively, but the design also means that you clean both sides of the lens at the same time. As an added bonus, the teardrop shape of the pads provides a point that enables you to get into tricky corners, and when not in use the handle and prongs slide into a protective sheath that contains a slide-out brush in the other end for removing larger bits of dirt.

The carbon pads are good for 500 uses, which should see you through a couple of years if used every few days. It also comes in a range of colours so you can coordinate it with your outfit if you so desire. Peeps is one of the best spectacle-cleaning solutions I've come across and this one now resides permanently in my camera bag.

**Nigel Atherton**



The Peeps' handle and prongs slide into a protective sheath

**Amateur Photographer**  
Testbench  
**GOLD**  
★★★★★

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## At a glance

- 20.2-million-pixel, 1in, BSI CMOS sensor
- 32mm equivalent, f/1.8 lens
- ISO 100-51,200
- PASM, scene and auto modes
- JPEG, DNG raw and DxO SuperRaw formats
- Records 1,080p video at 30fps
- Connects to iPhone or iPad via Lightning connector
- Price £449

# DxO One

Is the **DxO One** the perfect camera upgrade for iPhone users? **Andy Westlake** finds out

## For and against

- +** Compact design that's easy to carry with you at all times
- +** Excellent image quality
- +** Seamless integration with iPhone
- Fixed focal-length lens limits flexibility
- Poor battery life
- Compatibility limited to Apple devices

## About DxO

DxO is a French company that's best known for its imaging software. This includes DxO OpticsPro, a fully featured raw converter that's based around profiled lens-correction modules; DxO FilmPack, that emulates the look of analogue film; and DxO ViewPoint, for correcting perspective and wideangle distortions. The company also makes the DxO Analyzer image-analysis system, and runs the DxOMark website that assesses the technical image quality of cameras and lenses. It is also a supplier of image signal processors (ISPs) to mobile device manufacturers.



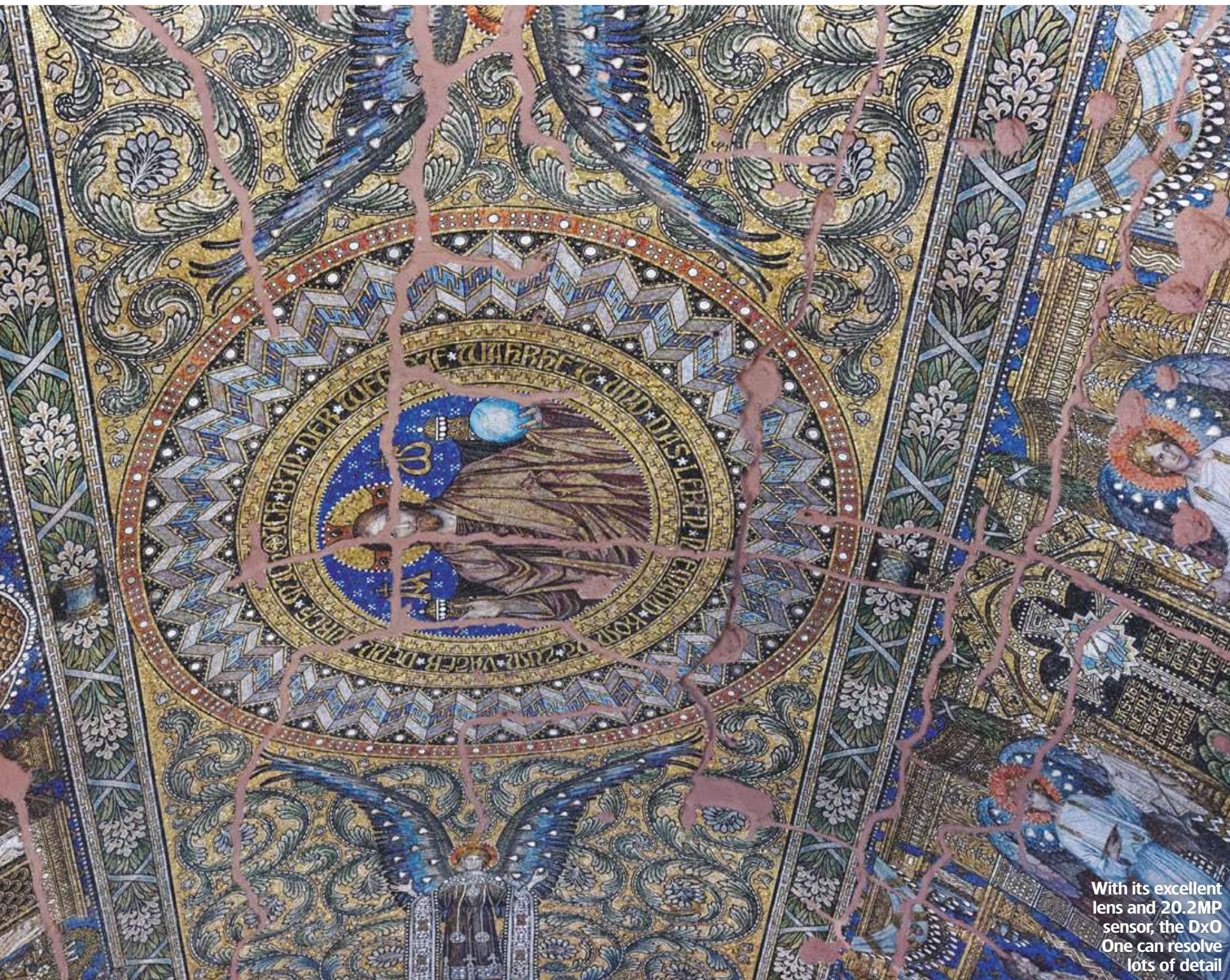
## Data file

Sensor	20.2-million-pixel, 1in, BSI CMOS
Output size	5,406x3,604 pixels
Lens	32mm equivalent, f/1.8
Focal-length magnification	2.7x
Shutter speeds	15-1/8,000sec
ISO	100-51,200
Exposure modes	PASM, auto, scene
Metering system	Multi, spot, centreweighted
Exposure compensation	±3EV in 1/3 steps
Drive mode	Single shot
Video	1,080p at 30fps, 720p at 120fps
Memory card	MicroSD UHS-I U3
Power	Internal rechargeable Li-ion
Battery life	Max 200 shots
Dimensions	67.5x48.85x26.25mm
Weight	108g
Compatibility	iPhone and iPad with Lightning connector, iOS8



**W**e're constantly being told that the camera market is in decline, with sales falling dramatically, particularly in the inexpensive zoom compact sector. Despite this, more pictures are now being taken than ever before, and shown to a larger audience through social-media channels such as Instagram and Facebook. This is all down to smartphones, of course, because since the advent of the iPhone 3G in 2008, smartphones have become the picture-taking tool of choice for many people. Indeed, with the excellent image quality possible from recent generations of smartphones, it's now only enthusiast photographers who see the need to own a separate camera. Yet smartphone cameras have





With its excellent lens and 20.2MP sensor, the DxO One can resolve lots of detail

their limitations. Sure, they're slimmer, easier to use and deliver better image quality than most point-and-shoot film cameras ever did, but with their small sensors and tiny non-zooming lenses they have poor low-light image quality and allow little scope for compositional flexibility. DxO is aiming to address this with the One – a camera that plugs into an iPhone via its Lightning connector, and uses a 1in-type sensor and fast 32mm equivalent f/1.8 lens to deliver much better image quality.

Various attempts have been made to address the shortcomings of smartphone cameras, most notably by Sony with its 'lens-style cameras', which have in turn been imitated by several other companies. These, in effect, are camera modules consisting of a lens, sensor, processor, battery

and memory card, which are designed to use a smartphone as both screen and control unit, connecting via Wi-Fi. This may seem like a good idea at first, but it turns out to be less practical in reality. The Wi-Fi connection complicates image sharing from the phone, and drains the batteries of both devices, while the cylindrical shape isn't particularly convenient to carry around, which rather negates the whole point.

DxO's solution is to use a direct physical connection between the camera module and the phone, and make a much smaller device that's genuinely pocketable. This immediately makes for a much more practical system than the Wi-Fi-connected devices we've seen until now. But is this enough to make the DxO One a must-have accessory for iPhone users?

## Features

The DxO One is based around the familiar 1in-type, 20.2-million-pixel sensor that's used in an increasing range of enthusiast compact cameras, as well as the Sony Cyber-shot DSC-QX100 lens-style camera and the Panasonic Lumix DMC-CM1 smartphone. In DxO's hands it offers a sensitivity range of ISO 100–51,200, with most other cameras that use it maxing out at ISO 12,800. In front of the sensor is a six-element, 11.9mm lens offering a 32mm equivalent angle of view, with an aperture range from f/1.8 to f/11.

On the back of the unit is a tiny monochrome screen that displays battery life, exposure settings, file format and the number of shots remaining on the card. Beneath it is a hinged cover for the MicroSD

card slot and the Micro USB socket that's used for charging the battery and transferring images to a computer. It's worth noting that the DxO One has no tripod thread, so you'll need to use some kind of clamp to attach it to a support.

Video recording is available, but with only a limited set of options. You can record in either full HD (1,920x1,080 pixels) at 30fps or HD (1,280x720 pixels) at 120fps, which is then played back at 30fps to give one-quarter-speed slow-motion footage. Exposure compensation can be applied before the start of recording, and electronic image stabilisation is available.

The device itself has only a single shooting control, which is a conventional two-stage shutter button on top towards the front. This means that the





➤ One can still be used in standalone mode when it is disconnected from an iPhone. At this point the camera works in fully auto mode, and employs face detection for autofocus when it can. It's possible to switch between stills and movie recording by swiping a finger across the screen.

### Build and handling

With its robust shell, there's little to fault about the DxO One in terms of build quality. It certainly doesn't feel delicate, and I was quite happy dropping it into a bag or pocket when taking it out and about.

The lens is protected by a sliding cover when it's not in use. Pulling this downwards turns the camera on and releases the sprung Lightning connector from its folded-in position. DxO says that the connector is quite unlike those used for other devices, such as charging docks, and has been tested to survive 38,000 connection/disconnection cycles. While it's designed to connect firmly into the iPhone, it will also release when placed under stress, and is 'fused' so that it will fold into the body when pushed hard.

In practical use the One works rather well. This is due substantially to the rotating Lighting connector, as you end up with, in effect, a small camera module attached to



Unlike smartphone cameras, the DxO One can give nicely blurred backgrounds due to its larger sensor and f/1.7 lens

a large rotating touchscreen for viewing and control. This isn't unlike Nikon's classic split-body Coolpix 900-series designs from the early days of digital, and the advantage is that you can hold the camera comfortably at waist level, rather than in front of you. It does, however, mean that you're liable to shoot everything in landscape format.

I tried the One on the iPhone 5, iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus. To me, it seemed better suited for use with the smaller-screened models, as the 6 Plus feels a little too large and awkward. In all cases, operation is very much a two-handed affair – one to hold the phone and the other to hold the camera. I wouldn't trust the safety of either expensive device

to the friction-based connection between them, no matter how well engineered it is. It's worth pointing out that some phone cases can interfere with the connection too. The One can also be used on iPads with a Lightning connector.

### Autofocus

The DxO One uses a conventional contrast-detection system for

## What is SuperRaw?

HIGH ISO shots are inevitably noisy, simply because the sensor is capturing very little light. One way around this is to use multi-shot noise reduction, whereby the camera takes several shots of the same scene in quick succession and then combines them to make a composite image. The idea is that, because noise is random, it will average out and be reduced in the final image, while real detail should be retained.

Plenty of cameras can do this, but usually only when shooting in JPEG mode. What's different about the DxO One is that it can shoot four frames in quick succession and record them together as a single SuperRaw file (in effect, four linked DNGs). Compatible software, including DxO Connect and DxO OpticsPro, can then convert the SuperRaw files to JPEGs.

SuperRaw files certainly give reduced noise at high ISOs, although the converted JPEGs can acquire a somewhat unnatural over-

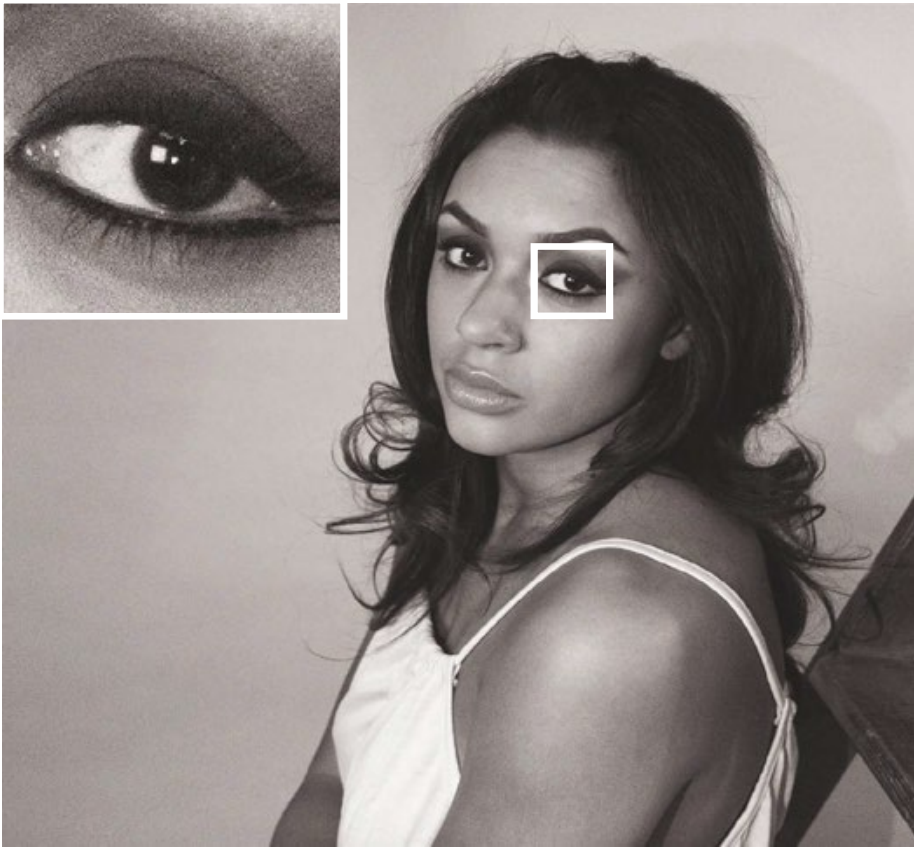


DxO's SuperRaw format gives impressively low noise, as this ISO 3,200 shot demonstrates

smoothed appearance. The bigger problem, though, is the sheer length of time needed to process the 80MB files. On my one-year-old Windows 10 Ultrabook, each took more than four minutes to develop, which isn't really very

practical. It's possible to use a faster 'HQ' conversion that takes a quarter of the time, but this results in visibly higher luminance noise. Overall, given the resources it requires, I'm not convinced that SuperRaw is worth the effort.





**Low-light image quality is impressive – this was shot at ISO 3,200 and f/1.7**

autofocus, with the subject area selectable anywhere across the frame. Normally, the camera will try to select the subject automatically, prioritising faces when it detects them, but its choice can be overridden manually simply by tapping the screen. In normal lighting conditions autofocus is fast and accurate, and it's only when light levels drop extremely low that it struggles, such as in dimly lit interiors and streetlight-illuminated night scenes. Even then, if you can point the camera at a sufficiently high-contrast edge, it will usually find focus. Manual-focus override is available if necessary too, using an on-screen slider and magnified view in the centre of the frame.

### Operation

The camera's shooting features are defined by the DxO One controller app. The first time you plug the device into your iPhone it will take you to the App Store and prompt you to download the app. Thereafter, it will automatically launch the app and go to the shooting screen, so long as the iPhone is unlocked.

The app itself is attractively designed and laid out. Its minimalism reflects the fact that there are relatively few features available. A control panel on the left side of the phone's screen gives access to exposure parameters – shutter speed, aperture, ISO and exposure compensation – but there's no

live histogram or overexposure warning display to help guide your choices. It's also possible to change white balance, metering mode and focus mode, including manual focus, but these settings are hidden away off-screen at the end of a scrolling list, with no visual cue to suggest they exist.

On the right side of the screen is a column of four buttons. The top selects file format, from JPEG, DNG raw and DxO's unique multi-shot SuperRaw setting. Below that is self-timer (two or ten seconds), an option to use the iPhone's flash and exposure-mode selection. In addition to auto, program, shutter priority, aperture priority and manual modes, there are scene modes for sports, portraits, landscapes and night scenes. The on-screen touch buttons are well separated and responsive, and the icons clear, making the app very easy to use.

DxO is keen to stress that both the app and the camera firmware can be updated automatically, and has revealed several features that it will add in the near future. These include an electronic levels display, burst shooting at 8fps with a 20-frame raw buffer, detailed exposure information overlay on the live view display, and the option to display Exif data during playback. Depending on how you choose to look at it, DxO is adding features for free based on early feedback, or it has launched the app before it is ready for prime time and is working on

## Focal points

The DxO One fits some very capable imaging hardware into a genuinely pocketable unit

### Selfie mode

The DxO One can be connected to the iPhone facing towards the user for selfies. The app even uses the iPhone's screen as an additional warm-toned light to illuminate your face.

### Lightning connector

This swivels  $\pm 60^\circ$  for low-angle or overhead shots, and folds away neatly when not in use.

### Sliding lens cover

Pulling this down turns the device on and releases the spring-loaded folding Lightning connector.

### Status screen

A tiny touchscreen displays exposure settings and can be used to switch between stills and movies when the One is detached from the iPhone.



### Strap connector

This allows attachment of a wrist strap for more secure handling.

### MicroSD slot

The One records JPEG and raw files to a MicroSD card, and can also save JPEGs to the phone's camera roll.

### Micro USB

This is used for transferring files to a computer and charging the built-in battery.







The DxO One gives excellent results even under dim artificial lighting

➤ bringing it up to speed. One of the DxO One's key advantages compared to other add-on cameras is that it requires no messing around with your network connections. With Sony QX models and their various clones, so long as your phone is controlling the camera unit over Wi-Fi, it has effectively lost its connection to the internet. In contrast, with the DxO One JPEGs can be copied to your iPhone's camera roll as you shoot, and can even be uploaded to social media directly from the DxO app without having to turn off or disconnect the camera. Alternatively, you can edit your pictures in the Photos app before uploading. Overall, the DxO One fits much better with how you normally use an iPhone compared to other 'connected cameras' I've used.

There's a second side to the DxO One, though – it also has aspirations to be a serious camera, recording DNG raw files that can be opened in almost any imaging software and processed how you please. DxO supplies a very basic downloader/raw-converter program called DxO Connect and early buyers of the One will also get free lifetime licences to DxO OpticsPro, which is a more sophisticated raw converter with a greater range of adjustments and controls.

## Performance

The whole point of the DxO One is to provide better image quality than mobile-phone cameras, and with its 1in sensor and fixed-focal-length lens it does just that. DxO has considerable experience in image processing, and it shows when looking at the One's images. Colour rendition is pleasant, even in dull weather, with accurate yet saturated tones aided by

well-judged auto white balance.

The lens is excellent. It is a little soft in the extreme corners at large apertures if you examine the images closely, but it gives sharp results across the frame when it's stopped down to f/5.6. There's no visible distortion or chromatic aberrations, so images look clean even when viewed close-up.

At low ISO sensitivities images are sharp, clean and highly detailed, and noise only starts to have an impact at ISO 800. At higher sensitivities there's an inevitable deterioration of fine detail, but I'd still be reasonably happy shooting at ISO 1,600 and 3,200. Beyond this things go awry, and while ISO 6,400 and 12,800 are usable when necessary, the two Hi settings (equivalent to ISO 25,600 and 51,200) are a step too far.

The DxO One's Achilles' heel, though, is battery life. DxO claims it can shoot up to 200 frames per charge, but in my experience this is wildly optimistic. I found the battery meter dropped alarmingly quickly during normal use, and I rarely got more than 60 or 70 shots per charge, even when I got into the habit of turning it off immediately after every shot.

This might be OK for casual users who take just a few pictures every couple of hours, and are used to recharging their phones at the end of every day, but in my opinion it seriously dents the DxO One's credentials as a camera for serious photographers, who would probably be better served by an enthusiast zoom compact such as the Canon PowerShot G7 X or one of the Sony RX100 series. It is possible to recharge the camera from a power bank as you go along, and even shoot at the same time, but this isn't very practical.

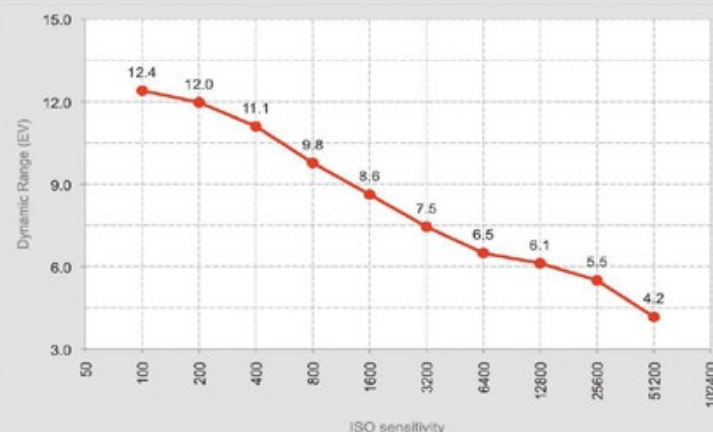


# Lab results

Andrew Sydenham's lab tests reveal just how the camera performs

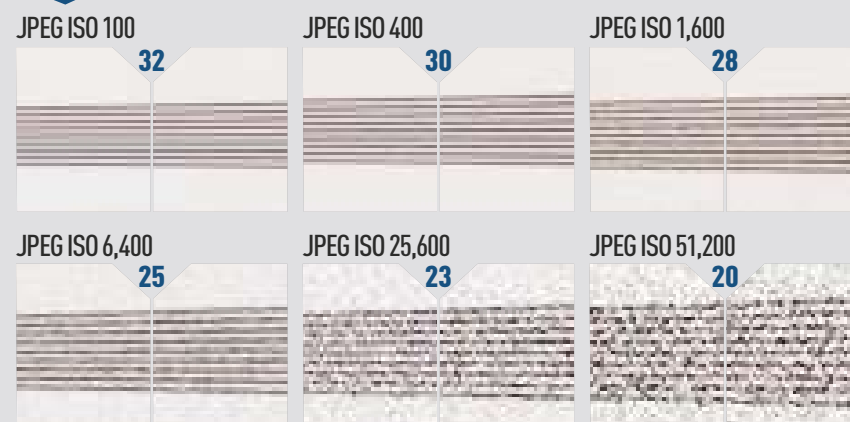
We have tested lots of cameras that use the Sony 20.2-million-pixel, 1in sensor over recent years, and the DxO One gives image quality that matches our expectations for this unit. At low ISO sensitivities it produces highly detailed images with decent dynamic range and no visible noise; for the very best results I'd keep the sensitivity at ISO 800 or lower. Step up to ISO 1,600 and 3,200 and images are still very usable, although it should be noted that fine detail does start to suffer visibly. Higher ISO settings aren't so great, though: I would be happy using ISO 6,400 and perhaps ISO 12,800 for casual web use and small prints, but the extended settings push this sensor too far, and only really give usable results with DxO's multi-shot SuperRaw mode. But it's also worth remembering that with the fast f/1.7 lens, such high ISO settings aren't needed all that often anyway.

## Dynamic range




We're accustomed to seeing fine results from the 20.2-million-pixel, 1in sensor in our Applied Imaging tests, and in the DxO One it behaves as well as ever. Dynamic range is excellent through to ISO 400, but starts to fall more quickly at higher settings. By ISO 3,200 we register just 7.5EV, which is rather marginal and indicates loss of shadow detail. The higher settings give poor results, with sub-6EV readings at the top two ISOs rendering them barely usable at all, at least in conventional single-shot-capture mode.

## Resolution



At low ISO sensitivities, the DxO One resolves around 3,200l/ph, which is about as high as we've seen from this sensor, and confirms the quality of the lens (we shot our resolution test chart at f/2.8). Resolution falls slowly as the sensitivity is increased, dropping to around 2,800l/ph at ISO 1,600 and 2,500l/ph at ISO 6,400, which is still quite respectable. Beyond this, noise has a serious impact on recorded detail, with just 2,000l/ph registered at ISO 51,200, even with our high contrast black and white test chart.





## Amateur Photographer




Image Engineering

Our cameras and lenses are tested using the industry-standard Image Engineering IQ-Analyser software. Visit [www.image-engineering.de](http://www.image-engineering.de) for more details

## Noise

Both raw and JPEG images taken from our diorama scene are captured at the full range of ISO settings. The camera is placed in its default setting for JPEG images. Raw images are sharpened and noise reduction applied, to strike the best balance between resolution and noise.



JPEG ISO 100



JPEG ISO 400



JPEG ISO 1,600



JPEG ISO 6,400



JPEG ISO 25,600



JPEG ISO 51,200



As usual for cameras with this sensor, the DxO One delivers a combination of excellent detail and low noise at ISO 100. Some fine-grained luminance noise starts to creep in at ISO 400 when viewing images closely, but this will rarely have any impact on prints. By ISO 1,600 we see shadow detail starting to block up, while low-contrast detail blurs away. By the time we reach ISO 6,400, almost all fine detail has been lost and colours have become desaturated, making this usable only for non-critical purposes, such as low-resolution web images. The top two extended settings of ISO 25,600 and ISO 51,200 are barely usable at all, when looking at either the camera's JPEGs or, as here, DNG files processed through Adobe Camera Raw.

## The competition



### Panasonic Lumix DMC-CM1

Price £699

Sensor 20.1MP 1in

ISO 100-25,600 (extended)

The CM1 is an Android smartphone like no other, packing a 20.1MP, 1in-type sensor and 28mm-equivalent f/2.8 lens into its relatively slimline frame. The result is the best image quality from a phone camera, ever.



### Sony Cyber-shot DSC-QX100

Price £249

Sensor 20.2MP 1in

ISO 160-25,600

One of the original lens-style cameras, the QX100 borrows the 20.2MP, 1in sensor and 28-100mm equivalent f/1.8-4.9 lens from the original RX100 compact. Compared to the DxO One, it's bulky and awkward to use.



### Canon PowerShot G7 X

Price £360

Sensor 20.2MP 1in

ISO 125-12,800

With its useful 24-100mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 lens, 20.2MP, 1in sensor and built-in Wi-Fi connectivity, the G7 X is a versatile enthusiast-oriented zoom compact equipped with a full range of manual controls.

## Our verdict

WITHOUT doubt, the DxO One is a clever design, and I've found it to be a much more satisfactory way of adding an accessory camera to an iPhone than the Wi-Fi connected lens-style cameras I've used. With a direct physical connection to the controlling device, operational lag is effectively eliminated, and placing the camera as a rotating module at the end of the phone rather than clipping it onto the front makes for much more comfortable use. The whole experience of selecting and posting your favourite shots to social media is pretty seamless too.

There's nothing to complain about in terms of image quality, either, with the combination of a 1in sensor and fast lens outclassing any smartphone camera. The ability to record raw files to the MicroSD card and process them later only adds to the camera's appeal. Some

photographers may miss the compositional flexibility of a zoom lens, but this is the price you pay for such a small, easily pocketable unit that you can carry all the time.

Despite its undoubted strengths, though, it's difficult to wholeheartedly recommend the DxO One at this point. The app feels underdeveloped and lacking in features, and the poor battery life is likely to be a serious problem for enthusiast photographers. However, DxO's commitment to updating the system means that the app should improve quickly, and with any luck the battery life will get better too.

Overall, the DxO One is the most practical 'connected camera' yet, and has lots of potential for improvement. It's a really exciting concept, and great for iPhone users who want a better camera that's easy to carry around, but it's not quite ready yet to make standalone compact cameras obsolete.



FEATURES	7/10
BUILD & HANDLING	7/10
METERING	8/10
AUTOFOCUS	8/10
AWB & COLOUR	8/10
DYNAMIC RANGE	8/10
IMAGE QUALITY	8/10
VIEWFINDER/LCD	N/A



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This image was taken with two Nissin Di700A units – one with a softbox positioned to the left and one with a spotlight grid and pink gel on the background

# Nissin Di700A

The **Nissin Di700A** with Air Commander is a powerful off-camera flash kit with wireless control for TTL metered and manual shooting. **Callum McInerney-Riley** tries it out



Just a few years ago, shooting with off-camera flash was prohibitively expensive for most amateur photographers. If you wanted to buy a high-end flashgun, transmitter and receiver set-up you needed a fairly large amount of cash. However, in the past few years, companies such as Yongnuo, Hähnel, Phottix, Cactus Imaging and Nissin have produced a variety of inexpensive triggering systems that are very impressive. In fact, Nissin showed what it is capable of last year when its i40 flashgun won Accessory of the Year at the 2015 Amateur Photographer Awards. We concluded that it was the best flashgun for compact system cameras while also being very affordable.

Nissin has now turned its attention to off-camera flash, using the Nissin Di700 flashgun as the foundation for the new Nissin Di700A. The company has added a wireless radio receiver built into the flash unit that then pairs with a brand-new Nissin Air 1 Commander unit. This allows users to manually control the flashgun wirelessly off-camera with TTL metering – and the best part about the Nissin Di700A is that it costs around £200.

## Features

The headline feature of the Nissin Di700A flashgun is the 2.4GHz radio receiver that's built into the unit, so an additional receiver attachment is not required to fire the flashgun. The Nissin Air 1 Commander transmitter is capable of directly communicating with the Nissin Di700A flash and allows control of the flash settings wirelessly, as well as being able to trigger the flash on command.

Radio technology is widely considered to be the most reliable of any communication between a receiver and transmitter, as it does not require line-of-sight transmission like infrared or optical triggering. Wireless is a much better option when shooting on location, as it allows photographers to position the flash behind the camera, a wall or around a corner and – provided it's in range – will fire without a problem. That's difficult to do with optical or infrared systems. Nissin claims to have a usable range of 30 metres between flash and commander.

The second big feature of the Nissin Di700A flashgun is TTL metering. In the past, TTL has been the preserve of expensive flash-triggering systems. Using the Nissin Air 1 Commander,

the Di700A emits a small pre-flash before the main exposure, allowing the camera to automatically gauge the power output required from the flashgun to achieve a good exposure. Effectively, this is full automatic mode, and it's all available off-camera as well as on-camera.

With the Air 1 Commander, users can manually adjust the TTL exposure of the flashgun by  $\pm 2\text{EV}$  in  $\frac{1}{3}$ -stop increments. Flash-exposure compensation can also be adjusted on the camera to achieve  $\pm 3\text{EV}$  compensation. Featuring three groups (A, B and C), plus seven channels, it's possible to control up to 21 flashes at a time. I found it useful to put a key light on group A, a fill light on group B and a hair light on group C. The Nissin Air 1 Commander then allowed me to control these settings independently in both manual and TTL until I achieved my desired balance between lights.

At present, there are no additional receivers to adapt other flashguns and integrate them into Nissin Air system, although Nissin has stated that some are due to be released later this year. Currently, though, if you are using the Air 1 Commander, you won't be



able to use the radio control to fire any other flash units, which is a disadvantage for anyone who already has a flash kit. The only workaround is to use flashes in the manual-power setting and trigger them using an optical slave, but this means you lose wireless control.

Two slave modes – SD and SF – are available with the Nissin Di700A. SD stands for slave digital, and in this mode the flash is designed to ignore pre-flashes such as those that come from a TTL system. SF stands for slave film and in this mode the flash will fire as soon as it senses a flash pulse. SF is useful when using studio strobes or a manual lighting set-up. I found SF mode made it easy to add in additional flashes to a lighting set-up without the hassle of connecting a receiver.

Choosing high-speed sync or second-curtain sync in the camera menu will enable either of these functions. In high-speed sync the photographer can shoot at shutter speeds of up to 1/8000sec, which is ideal for catching fast-moving action. Second-curtain sync is a little different. Instead of allowing fast shutter speeds, it allows slower ones and will fire the flash at the end of an exposure. This means

**Even for smaller subjects, an off-camera flash can create appealing and dynamic lighting**



users can shoot at 1/10sec and it will fire a shot before the shutter closes – a very useful way to capture movement and ambient light.

Four AA batteries are needed to power the Di700A flashgun, while the Air 1 Commander requires two AAA batteries. The Di700A batteries are loaded into a battery magazine; this enables users to load batteries much quicker. Spare BM-02 magazines can be bought for around £11.

Most flashes feature an LCD screen to display the settings, but the Nissin has an LED screen. Behind the screen are a number of small LED lights, which illuminate the data, and this is said to help preserve battery life.

The Di700A has a fairly extensive zoom range of 24–200mm, which can be extended to 16mm. At 105mm the flash has a guide



**When the subject moves erratically, the only way to get consistent results is using TTL flash metering**

number of 48 metres at ISO 100. At the 200mm it has a guide number of 54 metres. Nissin quotes a recycle time of 0.1–4secs at full power. The head tilts from  $-7^{\circ}$  to  $90^{\circ}$  and swivels  $180^{\circ}$  in both directions.

On either side of the flashgun are rubberised flaps that cover two sync sockets and an external power pack port.

Included with the kit is a durable carry case with a belt clip and a small stand. This stand has a thread in the base that allows the flash to be mounted onto a light stand or tripod.

I used the Canon version of this flash, but Nikon and Sony versions are also available. While Canon and Nikon users are often spoilt for choice with compatible products, Sony is sometimes overlooked, so it's very good to see a reliable TTL flash system for the brand.

## In use

The Di700A – like all Nissin flashes – is designed to be very simple to operate. On the flash and commander unit there is a test button, a power button, a set button and a scroll wheel – and that's it. To use the flash, all you have to do is tap 'Set' to get to the group you want and spin the scroll wheel to adjust.

I used the Nissin Di700A mostly at short range and found that the commander fired every time without any issues. I was able to fire the flash up to the 30 metres Nissin quoted, but thereafter the signal started to drop and it began to misfire on occasions.

With a guide number of 48 metres at ISO 100 at the 105mm zoom position, the Di700A is reasonably powerful. However, when compared to the top-end Canon





Using groups I was able to control lights independently of each other on the commander

flashguns that boast 58 metres at the same parameters the Nissin doesn't quite compare. For those looking to shoot with flash in direct sunlight you might find the Di7000A is a little underpowered. However, for everything else it's more than capable.

The flash locks into place securely using a screw wheel to attach it to the hotshoe. While I find the slide-locking button system on both Canon and Nikon flashes to be quicker, this still does the job. The commander requires users to simply push a button to slide it on or off.

One handy operational feature is that all the settings can be locked so you can't accidentally knock the buttons.

In bright conditions, the LED display needs to be shielded from the sun. It's less easy to see than an LCD screen, although if it saves power

as Nissin says it does I'd sooner have the extra power in the batteries.

Using Eneloop XX batteries, the recycle time of the Di700A is perfectly fine on low-power settings, but when turned up to full power it takes around 4secs between each flash and after around five flashes the speed reduces to 6-10secs. There is also an overheating safety shut-off feature that will disable the flashgun for 15 minutes if it gets too hot.

Having said that, it's very unlikely that this will be needed, but even so

it's nice to know there's a safety feature in place.



## Our verdict

THE NISSIN Di700A offers a lot of the features found on top-end flash systems. Professional photographers might find that the wireless trigger doesn't provide enough range, or that the power output isn't high enough to overpower harsh midday sun and that the recycle time is a little slow for working fast. However, for the enthusiast photographer – which is really who this system is designed for – it's brilliant.

TTL metering and an ultra-simple interface allow the beginner to start using the flash straight away. TTL is great for fast-moving subjects, events photography and when shooting groups of people. As subjects move around and/or lighting starts to change, you don't have to worry about constantly adjusting the flash power. Also, as you can make all the changes remotely, it allows a much speedier workflow than relying on yourself or an assistant to manually change the settings. It's good to know there's also a fall-back option – when the lighting is changing quickly and TTL can't keep up, it's quick and easy to switch to manual-power controls on the commander. There are very few things not to like about the Nissin's build, either, as it appears to be well built and very durable.

The Nissin Di700A is one of the best value-for-money flash systems available. If any enthusiast photographer wanted to take a leap into off-camera flash, especially on a budget, this would be my first recommendation.

### Data file

**Price**  
£200

**Coverage**  
24-200mm (16mm when using built-in wide panel)

**Head rotation**  
90° up, 7° down, 180° left, 180° right

**Guide no**  
48m at ISO 100 (105mm)

**Recycling time**  
0.1-4secs

**Power**  
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**Weight**  
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## Which lens?

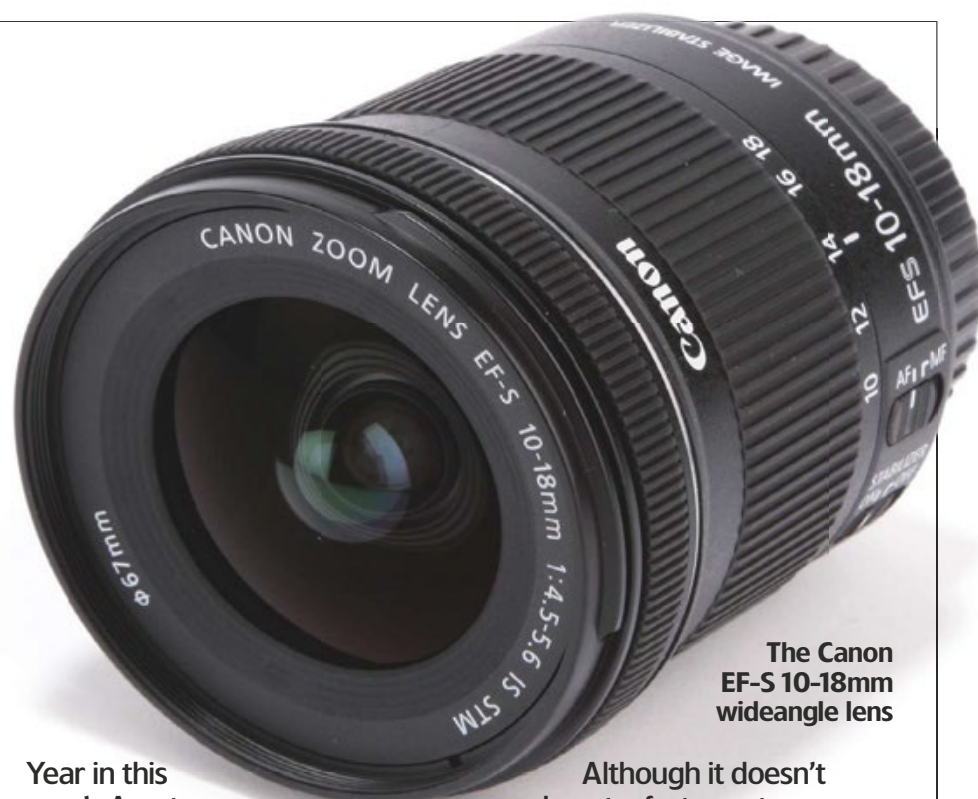
**Q** I have recently switched from a smartphone to a DSLR. With my smartphone I was using an Olloclip 3-in-1 lens, which allowed me to get the macro, wideangle and fisheye shots I wanted. With my DSLR, though, I only have the kit lens and I've been looking into getting a fisheye or wideangle lens to achieve similar shots. I use a Canon EOS 500D so the lens will need to be Canon compatible and within my budget of around £200. What do you suggest? **Roberto Galia**

**A** You have three options here, depending on what kind of effect you'd like to achieve the most. First, if you want that same look as the Olloclip fisheye adapter, with black space around the edge of the frame,

we'd suggest the Lensbaby circular fisheye. It costs £199 and is available in both Canon and Nikon fit. It gives a domestic door viewer – or 'peep hole' – effect.

Alternatively, if you don't want the blacked-out edges and would prefer the image to cover the entire frame, then look to the Samyang 8mm f/2.8 UMC II fisheye lens. It costs around £239 and creates a heavily distorted fisheye effect, which can be used to produce interesting compositions while giving a wide field of view. It will fit the Canon EOS 500D and has a 35mm equivalent focal length of 12mm, which is very wide.

Lastly, if you prefer not to have any distortion and would like a lens that fills the entire frame, try the Canon EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS STM (£180). It won Zoom Lens of the



The Canon EF-S 10-18mm wideangle lens

Year in this year's Amateur Photographer Awards and has proven itself to be one of the best budget wideangle lenses you can buy for a cropped-frame Canon camera.

Although it doesn't boast a fast aperture, it is impressively sharp and is the perfect entry-level lens for landscapes or wideangle shooting. **Callum McInerney-Riley**



The Sony Alpha 7 II's 24-70mm range offers increased image quality

## Crop clarification

**Q** I don't understand Andy Westlake's answer to G Rayner about crop sensors for wildlife photography (AP 8 August). Surely using the same lens on a smaller format is no different from pulling up a half-frame section from the larger sensor, optically speaking? So why recommend spending money on

an alternative camera body?

This interested me particularly as I am considering replacing my ageing and bulky Nikon D300 with a full-frame Sony Alpha 7 II. My principal photographic activity is landscapes and buildings, mainly while travelling. My current working lens is the Nikkor 16-85mm, whereas probably the best for the Sony would be the Zeiss 24-70mm. Presumably, I could effectively double that to 140mm by 'enlarging' a half-frame section. Printing to A3, therefore, should incur no loss of quality compared with printing the whole of a half-frame image from my present camera to the same size. Of course, that assumes there are sufficient pixels. In this instance, the Sony has 24 million, and the D300 has 12 million, so that shouldn't be a problem.

I am anxious to keep the camera's size and weight down

when travelling, so if my assumptions are correct, the full-frame replacement would seem to be a happy arrangement. Am I right? **John Kay**

**A** The key here is the resolution, and specifically the number of pixels you'd get cropping a full-frame image to give the same composition as one from an APS-C sensor. Crucially, the crop factor refers to linear dimensions, so you have to divide by it twice to calculate the resolution of the cropped image. For example, cropping the output from a 22-megapixel full-frame Canon EOS 5D Mark III down to APS-C size (1.6x crop) gives an 8.6-megapixel image, whereas the APS-C EOS 7D has an 18-megapixel sensor, resulting in almost twice the output resolution and therefore a clear

advantage to the APS-C camera. This is most important when shooting with long telephoto lenses, where you're often struggling for reach.

In your case, things are a little different. You're talking about upgrading from a 12-megapixel APS-C Nikon D300 with a 16-85mm lens (24-130mm equivalent) to a higher resolution 24-megapixel full-frame Sony Alpha 7 II, with a 24-70mm f/2.8 lens. In this case, whenever you're working the 24-70mm range, you have a clear increase in image quality. You can also crop your images to 100mm equivalent while still keeping 12MP resolution, but cropping down to 130mm equivalent to match the long end of your Nikon lens would leave you with about 7MP. Whether that's sufficient for your needs is, of course, up to you. **Andy Westlake**





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The competition is split into three rounds, each with its unique theme: Nature, Time and Love. To enter, submit a video no more than five minutes in length, of HD quality. You can shoot on any camera you'd like, and the content and editing are up to your imagination – so long as it fits

the round's particular theme.

Visit [www.thevideomode.com](http://www.thevideomode.com) to view the top videos, as well as the scores and a leaderboard for the overall competition. The winner will be the person with the most points after three rounds, who will win the overall prize as well as title of Amateur Filmmaker of the Year.

### Round One: Nature

In this round we ask you to film nature from a new perspective. Look at the world around you – from urban foxes at twilight, to a spectacular sunrise – from a new angle and get creative with unique viewpoints. To see examples, go to [www.thevideomode.com/examples](http://www.thevideomode.com/examples).

### Rounds and dates

Below is a list of the competition rounds, their themes and the dates you need to know. To view the results, visit [www.thevideomode.com](http://www.thevideomode.com). When planning your entry, take into consideration the criteria of fulfilling the brief, creativity and technical excellence on which you'll be judged.

Theme	Opens	Closes
Round One: Nature	1 Aug	30 Sep
Round Two: Time	1 Oct	31 Dec
Round Three: Love	1 Jan	28 Feb

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# My life in cameras

Documentary photographer Jon Tonks reveals the cameras that have helped to shape his career

## Jon Tonks



Jon Tonks is a British photographer based in Bath. His work has been featured in *The Sunday Times* and *The Guardian*, among others. In 2014, Jon was presented with the Vic Odden Award by the Royal Photographic Society for his first book

*Empire*, a journey across the South Atlantic exploring life on four remote islands – relics of the once-formidable British Empire. Martin Parr hailed the book as one of his best of the year.

### 1999 Pentax ME Super

I had this camera when I was about 19. I absolutely loved it, and took it around the world with me when I was about 22. I loved the simplicity of having just a 50mm lens on the front at all times, and as I was new to photography it was a great camera to learn with.



### 2005 Bronica ETRS

The Bronica ETRS was my first medium-format camera that I bought at college while doing my MA in photojournalism. This seduced me into the world of square format. With my background in design, the symmetry of shooting square and using the waist-level viewfinder was appealing.



### 2007 Hasselblad 501cm

When I started work on *Empire*, I knew I wanted a very reliable camera to take to remote locations. I'd been having a few issues with the shutter on the Bronica, so I decided to invest in a Hasselblad. Its simple efficiency meant it was marvellous for the work I was trying to do. After all, on those remote islands there's no repair shop nearby!



### 2010 Canon EOS 5D Mark II

The EOS 5D Mark II has been a fantastic companion to my medium-format work, as I can shoot bits of video and it has been great for editorial work too. I usually have just the fixed Canon 50mm f/1.2 lens attached to it. It's an incredibly reliable piece of kit, and at some point I'll most probably upgrade, but the digital world moves quicker than I do.



### 2013 Mamiya 6

Towards the end of shooting *Empire*, I bought a Mamiya 6 just to offer myself a little more flexibility while still shooting medium format. It's so lightweight to carry, and gives such super-sharp images, that it means I can capture things I might have missed. I can now comfortably take sharp images handheld with this and keep the Hasselblad on the tripod.



## BLAST FROM THE PAST

### Canon 7

Ivor Matanle recalls a brilliant rangefinder camera that he used professionally during the 1980s

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GUIDE PRICE TODAY £150-£250 (50mm f/1.8 Canon lens)

THE CANON 7, with built-in selenium exposure meter, and its 1964 successor, the Canon 7S with inbuilt CdS exposure meter, were about the most versatile coupled-rangefinder cameras using Leica-thread 39mm screw lenses ever produced. The viewfinder featured projected bright-line frames, selected with a knob on the top-plate, for 35mm, 50mm, 85mm, 100mm and 135mm lenses, and the metal-foil focal-plane shutter provided speeds from 1-1/1000sec with excellent flash synchronisation.

**What's good** Easy handling, fast accurate focusing, quiet shutter, a great camera for candid, social and street photography. Superb-quality Canon lenses, especially the 35mm f/1.8, 50mm f/1.8 and 100mm f/3.5.

**What's bad** The famed f/0.95 'dream lens'. It looks impressive, but is a nightmare to use. The shutter curtain is easily damaged.





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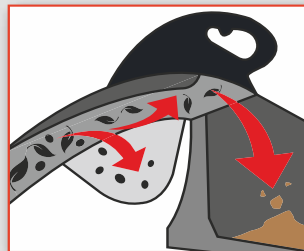
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### Professor Newman on...

# Ergos

Bob Newman looks at the use of the word 'ergos' among camera buffs

**E**rgos has become a commonly used term among camera fans. What it actually refers to is the controls or user interface of a camera. Presumably, it's a contraction of 'ergonomics', and if so, it's a misuse of the term. Ergonomics is a discipline of design of the human interface with technological artefacts, and dictates particular methods to that design – the foremost of which is 'usability' testing.

Essentially, the idea is that when the operation of a product is designed, that design process includes at least one cycle (and probably more) whereby real people operate the product or, more often, a mock-up of the product. During this testing, a rigorous statistical evaluation is made of how well they can or cannot use it. The criteria used are rather more concrete than finding out whether or not someone 'likes' the product. More likely, the subjects will be asked to undertake some typical tasks while being observed, and measurements will be made of how long the tasks take, how many interaction errors occur and so on.

The reason mock-ups are used is that this process should be undertaken early in the design cycle, before expenditure has been made on tooling, while the design can still be changed. My experience in several of the product designs that I have been involved in is that 'ergonomics' is rarely seriously practised. More often, the ideas of an industrial designer (which are very likely not based on an ergonomic assessment) or the whims of a company executive take precedence. In any case, properly conducting ergonomic tests is expensive, and is probably not as useful in marketing terms as



In the legendary Nikon F camera, the shutter mechanism placed the shutter release at the back of the camera, despite any ergonomic considerations. This didn't stop the Nikon F being the dominant professional camera of its generation

## 'When people praise "the ergos", they're saying they "like" the product's operation'

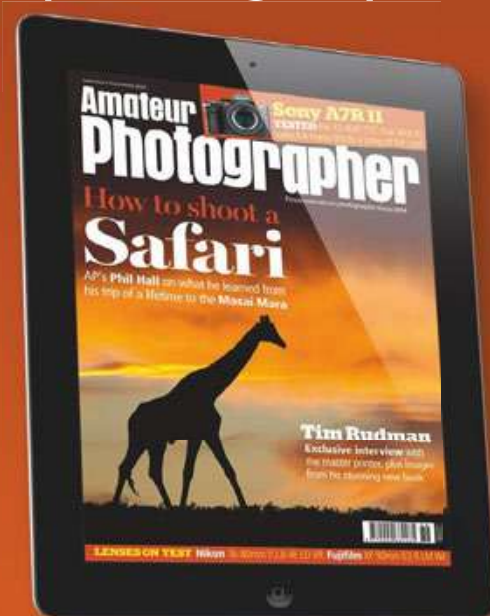
the designer's bright idea.

When people praise (or criticise) 'the ergos', what they are usually saying is that they 'like' the operation of the product – which is a world away from the actual practice of the science. Often the basis of praise is familiarity. A good example of this is the desire for a big dial on top of an SLR camera. Operationally, such a dial is hopeless for use when the camera is held to the eye, but the vast majority of SLRs have one. Nowadays it's called the mode dial, and very few cameras don't have one, although notable exceptions include top-end models from Canon and Nikon

designed for professional use (and very probably with the help of ergonomic studies). The mode dial has its origins in the shutter-speed dial, which was originally placed where it was on top of the camera simply because that was where the spindles of the focal-plane-shutter mechanism placed it. Modern cameras now have control wheels placed where they may be found easily by finger or thumb, but that left early examples bereft of the reassuring big dial on top. When it was re-invented as the mode dial (by Canon, if I remember correctly) it became once more the basis of how 'ergos' should be.

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**Bob Newman** is currently Professor of Computer Science at the University of Wolverhampton. He has been working with the design and development of high-technology equipment for 35 years and two of his products have won innovation awards. Bob is also a camera nut and a keen amateur photographer



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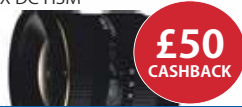
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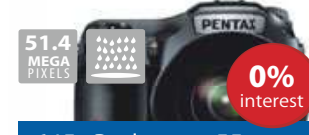


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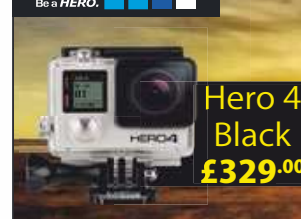
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Black or Silver

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10.0 fps  
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NEW

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PENTAX

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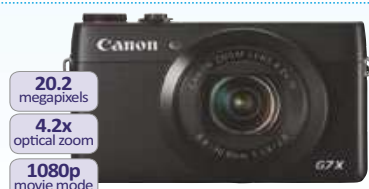
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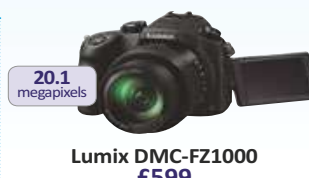
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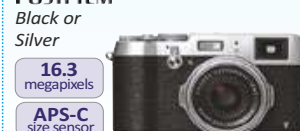
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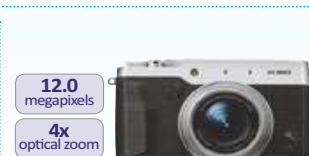
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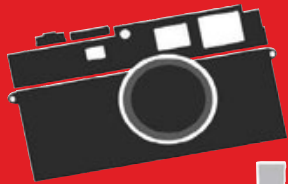




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Chimney early.....£89  
NC1 prism.....£69  
WLF late.....£110  
WLF chrome late.....£99  
WLF early.....£119  
A16 black.....£149  
A12 chrome latest.....£299  
A12 late blk/chr.....£129  
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50 F4 blk T\*.....£349  
60 F2.8 chrome.....£249  
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For the attention of:  
From:  
Issue date:

[chris.gozzett@timeinc.com](mailto:chris.gozzett@timeinc.com)  
Denton Photo Optics  
26 September 2015



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# Final Analysis

**Roger Hicks considers...**

'The Oracle', 2013, by Lhaura Rain



© LHAURA RAIN

For much of the 19th century there was a vogue for 'classical' paintings by artists such as Alma-Tadema, although it is easy to suspect that it was often just an excuse for painting scantily clad maidens. A parallel, but even less-remembered photographic fashion emulated such themes: think of OG Rejlander's 'The Two Ways of Life' (1857). Neither style, painterly or photographic, has been much practised (let alone practised well) for more than a century, but recently Lhaura Rain produced this superb interpretation, part of a series featuring the same two actresses.

The first impression is of high magic: the tarot cards, the palm reading and the candles. Then there are the clothes. They are probably just a plain white silk shirt and a satin nightdress, but that's not the

impression they create. Here they are transformed to oriental(ist) silks; photographic magic as much as occult.

The set is of a piece: rich, moody tile and a simple, white-fringed rug. The cynic in me suggested it was a bathroom, and the photographer confirmed it was. Suddenly, the white marble behind the sorceress looks like cladding on a bath. The jug and ewer are out of period, which may crassly be described as generic classical orientalist. But what you see with your heart isn't always what you see with your eyes.

The lighting, posing and composition are wonderful. The candles supply the mood, but alone they would create a murky, contrasty picture. The other light is simply a skylight window, to camera right and above: look at the highlights and shadows. The pose is fascinating: the actress on our

right is looking down at her own hand, subservient, even frightened, while the other looks straight at her, divining her personality or perhaps intimidating her. Compositionally, the picture is divided into two halves, linked by a gesture that is simultaneously human and inhuman.

At first glance, the tattoo on the subservient girl's foot looks distressingly like a fresh scar, though closer examination (and decent reproduction) lifts the curse. I'm not sure, though, that this picture works as part of a series: see the full set on [www.lhaurain.allyou.net](http://www.lhaurain.allyou.net). Rather, it's a perfect example of a 'tableau'. Historically, tableaux involved live models playing static roles, hence my use of the word 'actress'. The word 'tableau' derives from the French phrase *tableau vivant* or 'living picture'. This picture lives.

AP

Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his website at [www.rogerandfrances.com](http://www.rogerandfrances.com)). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. Next week he considers an image by Christopher Anderson





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